

HOW EXPOSITORY PREACHING ADDRESSES THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF  
RAP MUSIC ON THE MORALS OF TEENAGERS

A THESIS

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BY

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Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

-2 Timothy 2:15  
(New International Version)

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“God’s grace be upon you all.”

## ABSTRACT

The writer of the thesis-project argues that teaching exegetical preaching methods to youth ministers by exposing them to sound exegetical resources and equipping them with the skills to deliver contemporary sermons will improve their depth knowledge of the Bible, boost their confidence in ministry, and engage teenagers in biblical truths about holiness. This author will provide youth ministers with a list of preaching resources as well as, provide the rationale for them to be worthy vessels of God.

It was the main goal of this writer that three separate groups meet. First, the youth ministers met to gain knowledge and acquire the skills needed for exegetical preaching. Second, parents met to gain understanding about rap music's influence on teens, review statistics on the negative effect rap music has on teenagers' moral decisions and answered a questionnaire about their teenagers in order to formulate a plan to address the influence of this genre of music on their teens' lives. Finally, teenagers met in a third group to read scripture, review a rap music video and read/ analyze its lyric. The teens also answered a questionnaire about the impact and effect of negative rap songs in their decision-making and discussed strategies for avoiding common "teen" pitfalls.

The results from the parent/teen workshops show that both parents and teenagers want more involvement from the church to facilitate more discussion on the subject. Additionally, both groups expressed the need to have more parent-teen prayer and engagement at home and appreciated the candidness of the facilitator to help start the discussion between the groups.

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis project is an exegetical analysis of Biblical instructions from fathers to their sons. It aims to show that expository preaching can be used to instruct teenagers about the importance of filling themselves with the Word of God in order to guard themselves from moral corruption. The goal is, through expository preaching, to have young people apply Godly wisdom in their daily lives through the application of Godly instruction.

The topic is relevant in contemporary society because twenty-first century teenagers are bombarded with messages and images that influence them to think and behave in morally and ethically corrupt ways. Teens who do not hear healthy messages about sexuality and finances, or about how to make wise choices, grow into men and women who may eventually become parents who then rear children who are bankrupt of objective (Godly) truth. Consequently, this leads to generations of families who have a lack of integrity, are devoid of a biblical standard for living, and have difficulty, if not an inability, to correct misinformation about how people can and should live.

For over ten years, I served as a youth minister and noticed the differences between teenagers who received biblical instruction, sat under godly leadership and who were challenged to live holy lifestyles, as opposed to those who were not; the difference is glaringly evident and compels me to address the issue. Teenagers without any biblical instruction, in my experience, fall to the wayside much more quickly and have fewer godly resources to draw upon which makes them easier targets for Satan.

Added to that, teenagers who have not been instructed how to analyze information and who have not been trained to develop a biblical worldview, do not possess a moral compass with which they can navigate through the unbridled corrupt messages that are in many rap songs which is the primary music many urban teens listen to today. Marshall Mathers (Eminem), Lil Wayne, JayZ, and 2 Chainz all had top selling albums in 2013 and have become millionaires due to rap-album sales.

As a person who grew up in the “golden age” of rap music (80’s), worked for over fifteen years as a social worker and spent over ten years in youth ministry, I have observed many young people using rap music lyrics as the “mantra” with which they raise children, live by and even die by. Rappers deluge the impressionable minds of teenagers through music videos, Instagram, Facebook, radio stations and a plethora of media that are easily accessible today. Rap music knows no boundaries and comes in various genres of music from urban, to country and western, as well as, in different languages from French to Lebanese - it is a global phenomenon. Satan will take any willing participants, from any country, culture, tribe or economic strata.

As a doctoral candidate and preacher, I believe that a firm understanding of contemporary society and culture and their influence on teens today, gives youth ministers an awareness of the challenges teenagers in this modern era face. The present day preacher is well armed when they are alert to the tactics the enemy uses and understands the players in the game; having knowledge of rap music and its culture is then imperative. As a person who grew up with rap music, I am familiar with both gangster and Christian rap music and can use my seminary education to share expository preaching skills that can help address the negative effects of rap music on teenagers. I

believe that expository preaching specifically geared toward teenagers is one way to arm teens with the knowledge they need to live successful Christian lives.

First, a discussion of Godly instructions from a father to a son from selected passages in the Book of Proverbs will be discussed. Second, instructions from God the Heavenly Father to Jesus Christ, his son, is presented. Third, the Apostle Paul's admonition to his son in the ministry, Timothy, is shared. Fourth, the consequences of not adhering to biblical instruction are shared. Lastly, highlights on the benefits of studying the Bible as a way of addressing moral corruption will be presented.

## CHAPTER 1

### IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Entertainment is a part of the world we live in with all of its various forms. One genre of entertainment is “rap” music which comes out of the Hip-Hop Culture. This sub-culture (Hip-Hop) has produced music containing lyrics which is offensive to many adults and has contributed to the spiritual and moral decay of teenagers who listen to it. Due to the seductive, sexual overtones and the hidden misogynistic slant that rap music at times portray, urban teenagers who listen to this type of music may not see the dangers this kind of entertainment present. An example of this can be seen when teenage girls walk around singing the song “Magic Stick” by Little Kim and 50 cents. Young ladies may sing along with it because Little Kim, a female, is one of the rappers, it has a nice beat and is played on the radio several times during the day. “A concern to many interested in the development and growth of teenagers is the negative and destructive themes of certain kinds of music (rock, rap, hip-hop, etc.), including best selling albums promoted by major recording companies.”<sup>1</sup> Some of these record companies are Interscope, Def-Jam and Death Row. Hearing young ladies sing songs that are misogynistic like “magic stick,” made me realize that the lyrics do not register to these young ladies and they do not understand that they are promoting their own degradation. In many of the conversations I’ve had with teenagers who attend my home church, they have stated, “I don’t listen to the words, just the beat” when asked about the choices of music they

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<sup>1</sup> “The influence of Music and Music Videos,” *American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: Facts for Families* no. 40 (updated July 2004), accessed May 10, 2008, [http://www.aacap.org/cs/roots/facts\\_for\\_families/the\\_influence\\_of\\_music\\_and\\_music\\_videos](http://www.aacap.org/cs/roots/facts_for_families/the_influence_of_music_and_music_videos).

listen to. The Church has the mission of ministering to teenagers who listen to songs with explicit sexual overtones such as “Magic Stick.”

The negative influence of rap music is just as prolific in video form due to the hand-in-hand connection between music and music videos - there is just as much to watch as there is to listen to. Videos usually accompany songs that can be seen on iPods, television and cell phones. In the Internet age that we live in, videos are just as prevalent on the World Wide Web. In the article, “The influence of music and music videos” Sid Kirchheimer stated that, “teens who spend more time watching the sex and violence depicted in the “reel” life of “gangsta” rap music videos are more likely to practice these behaviors in real life, suggests one of the first studies to specifically explore how rap videos influence emotional and physical health.”<sup>2</sup>

Rap music evolved out of “house and block parties” on the East Coast in the Bronx Borough of New York City in the late 1970’s and gave a voice to the issues that took place on the streets, prisons and homes. It began around 1976-’77 when disco was very popular and DJs spoke using microphones to encourage the dancers to become more enthusiastic in their dancing. However, rap music has gone through many changes since that time. As someone who grew up listening to rap music, I have observed many of the obvious and subtle changes in the types of messages that have become prevalent through this music. The lyrics that are included in many contemporary rap songs are very different from those of the late 1970’s. Due to various changes, the music that radio stations play on the air waves, which is played in cars and occupy the iPods/iPhones of teenagers, has flooded their minds with messages of immediate gratification through

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<sup>2</sup> Sid Kirchheimer, “Does Rap Put Teens at Risk?” *WebMD.com*, last modified March 3, 2013, accessed May 9, 2008, <http://www.webmd.com/baby/news/20030303/does-rap-put-teens-at-risk>.

material possessions and sexual gratification of teenagers. The urban teenager can watch videos, as well as, listen to music on their cell phones even while in school. This music is readily available and is being promoted on television and the Internet as it has never before been done.

The Hip-Hop Culture is partly responsible for promoting such morally depraved music as there are untold numbers of videos containing scantily clad women who are dancing in strip clubs while others perform sexual-acts. Some of these “video vixens” are put on album covers and others on many main street billboards in urban settings. The influx of advertisements into the urban setting brings hedonism right to the ears and minds of urban teenagers. Bill O'Reilly stated, “Did you know that in 1999 alone, 81 million rap albums were sold?”<sup>3</sup> These young people, many of whom are not aware of the moral damage that is taking place while they deluge themselves with this music, continue to seek out the latest songs.

As a result of this morally depraved music and a music industry that is interested in record sales, urban teenagers have become victims of the very subculture which rap music grew out of. These teenagers almost unknowingly adopt the attitudes, mannerisms, fashion, language and behavior of rappers who do not espouse chastity or respect for others. Attitudes towards authority, social mores and sexuality show up in homes, schools and in their personal relationships. “After studying 522 black girls between the ages of 14 and 18 from non-urban, lower socioeconomic neighborhoods, researchers found that compared to those who never or rarely watched these videos, the girls who viewed these gangsta videos for at least 14 hours per week were far more likely

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<sup>3</sup> Bill O'Reilly, “The Rap on Rap,” *World Net Daily*, May 9, 2008, accessed August 16, 2001, [http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp/article\\_id/24081](http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp/article_id/24081).

to practice numerous destructive behaviors. Over the course of the one-year study they were:

- Three times more likely to hit a teacher
- Over 2.5 times more likely to get arrested
- Twice as likely to have multiple sexual partners
- 1.5 times more likely to get a sexually transmitted disease, use drugs, or drink alcohol.”<sup>4</sup>

My concern is about the poor attitudes toward sex that urban teenagers, who tend to be African-American and Latino, have as a result of the indoctrination of “do what you like” mentality, with which they are deluged with in many of the messages in rap music. “Rap songs often glorify drinking, drug use and violence; one study from the 1990s found that nearly half of all rap songs referred to alcohol.”<sup>5</sup> Urban teenagers are unaware that they are being guided by an industry, which is guiding the way they view sexuality because of the messages of many songs, videos and magazines promoted by the culture. The Hip-Hop culture is not driven by a premise that all teenagers who listen to rap music should come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior but to promote the culture of the streets. The results of promoting consequence-free sexual behaviors for teenagers are teen pregnancy, HIV/AIDS, people who struggle with respecting the choices of spouses, and a generation of people who have become morally bankrupt.

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<sup>4</sup> Sid Kirchheimer, “Does Rap Put Teens at Risk?”

<sup>5</sup> Randy Dotiga, “Rap’s Lyrics May Help Spur Violence,” *Health Day News*, April 24, 2006, accessed April 24, 2008, <http://yahoo.com/s/hsn/20060424>.

### **My Ministerial Setting**

The inner city section of Boston where I serve is Dorchester. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, there are 47,783<sup>6</sup> people who live there of which 58.9 % are Black or African American, 21% are White and 15.8% are Hispanic or Latino.<sup>7</sup> Due to the major concentration of Blacks and Latinos in this setting, understanding the different subgroups within those two populations is key to serving and preaching to them. The reason for this is because there are those in the Latino Community who come out of the Catholic Church, practice a cult or have no religious experience. Exegeting ones audience and community can be vital in preparing a sermon by injecting terms and words they are familiar with or mentioning experiences that the Holy Spirit can use to touch Black or Latino kids who grew up in a cult like the Jehovah's Witness, a religion like Santeria or even nonreligious or Christian backgrounds.

The census statistics also showed the 21.8% in this section of Dorchester lived below the poverty level in 2010.<sup>8</sup> Out of the 47,783 people in this part of Dorchester, there are 5,591 families headed by a single mom and 4,664 families where a husband and wife are married living with their children.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Google. "U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact-finder-Community Facts," last modified 2010, accessed February 24, 2016, <http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet>.

<sup>7</sup> Google. "U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact-finder-Community Facts."

<sup>8</sup> Google. "U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact-finder-Community Facts."

<sup>9</sup> Google. "U.S. Census Bureau, American Fact-finder-Community Facts."

### **Project Design: How I will solve my problem**

My plan is to host a workshop for youth ministers where we discuss the need for expository preaching and how it can address Hip Hop Culture's negative effect on the youth they minister to. One of the segments of the session will consist of giving the youth ministers the definition of expository preaching and then have a question and answer time. The workshop's aim is to get the ministers to gain a higher view of scripture and provide them with a list resources for their preaching library in order to help them understand and explain texts so that they preach more accurately.

I will also view a secular rap video, read materials, as well as look at a passage in the Bible to provide a context to address questions the youth ministers and teenagers may have with the hopes that they can be better prepared to deal with the attitudes teenagers in their youth group may have. I will also share statistical information with parents at my home church so that they become aware of the permeating attitudes/actions of teenagers.

I will create a survey of about 10 questions for urban teenagers and parents in order to glean their responses about how rap music with immoral messages affect teenagers' attitudes towards sex. I also plan to talk with parents about activities such as prayer/family time and its influence on parent/teen relationships and will discuss studies done regarding the effect of parental involvement as well as, their knowledge of their teenagers' activities outside the home. This will be done to give them an understanding of how rap music, parental involvement and quality of relationship affect the mentality and behavior of teenagers.

The answers from the questionnaires will be used in a workshop for youth ministers to gain insight and share information about how to address the negative effects

of rap music on teenagers through expository preaching. The goal of this project is to arm Youth Ministers with exegetical skills and resources.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION TO TEENS ON GODLY LIVING

#### Wisdom Literature

The Wisdom Literature of Proverbs "provides a godly worldview and offers insight for living,"<sup>1</sup> via clever sayings and wise observations about various circumstances in life. They instruct the reader to live in accordance with "principles, understanding, common sense, statecraft, and practical skills."<sup>2</sup> If applied, the lessons in Proverbs can give moral skillfulness and mental discernment among competing ungodly ideals in contemporary society.<sup>3</sup> Selected verses in the Book of Proverbs are used as a Biblical foundation to teach teenagers about morality.

The preamble in Proverbs 1:2-7 indicates the book's aim is for parents and teachers to use the book for teaching Israel's educable youth.<sup>4</sup> The book frequently addresses its subject as "my son" and urges him to adhere to the teachings of his father and mother."<sup>5</sup> Gaebelein states that the first purpose of adhering to the teachings of the parent in Proverbs 1:2 is for attaining wisdom and discipline. The word (Yadah) (דע') in

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<sup>1</sup> Trent C. Butler, ed., *Holman Illustrated, Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, Tenn.: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1337.

<sup>2</sup> Butler, 1337.

<sup>3</sup> Frank E. Gaebelein, ed. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary, New International Version*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 904.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce K. Waltke, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1-15* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004), 174.

<sup>5</sup> Duane A. Garrett, *The International Version "the American Commentary" An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of the Holy Scripture: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs*. vol. 14 (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993), 254.

Proverbs 1:2 is the Hebrew word that means “to know”<sup>6</sup> which is an infinitive and encompasses an intellectual and experiential acquisition of wisdom and discipline.<sup>7</sup> David Stabnow states that Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job and portions of Esther, Psalms, Song of Songs and Daniel are considered part of the wisdom literature in the Bible.<sup>8</sup> Prov. 9:10 states, “the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding”<sup>9</sup> and ultimate success.<sup>10</sup>

#### **NIV Proverbs 4:20-27**

<sup>20</sup> My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. <sup>21</sup> Do not let them out of your sight, Keep them within your heart; <sup>22</sup> for they are life to those who find them and health to a man’s whole body. <sup>23</sup> Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. <sup>24</sup> Put away perversity from your mouth; keep corrupt talk far from your lips. <sup>25</sup> Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. <sup>26</sup> Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. <sup>27</sup> Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil.”

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<sup>6</sup> Todd S. Beall, William A. Banks and Colin Smith, *Old Testament Parsing Guide*, revised and updated edition (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2000), 469.

<sup>7</sup> Gabelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 904.

<sup>8</sup> Butler, *Holman Illustrated, Bible Dictionary*, 1677.

<sup>9</sup> Psalms 9:10.

<sup>10</sup> Ps. 25:12-13, Eccles. 8:12-13.

Murphy emphasizes that the son should take to heart instructions and then keep them safe above anything.<sup>11</sup> In Proverbs 4:21, the father tells the son not to lose focus or sight of the father's words; in other words, the son should not (depart or turn aside)<sup>12</sup> from fatherly wisdom. Keck expands on this by stating that the son should memorize the instructions and put them at the primary focus of his consciousness in order that his life will flow from them.<sup>13</sup> Proverbs 4: 22 further encourages the son by telling him that the father's words bring "life" and "health."<sup>14</sup> It is then imperative that teens understand the justification for grasping onto godly wisdom.

Murphy comment on Proverbs 4:26-27 that the son is to have "tunnel vision, without any blinking, as described in Prov. 17:24; the perceptive person looks straight ahead at wisdom, but the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth."<sup>15</sup> The single-mindedness of pursuing the correct path highlights keeping one's foot from evil.<sup>16</sup> "The chapter closes with a brief instruction with a call to listen which is motivated by a promise of life. The positive and negative admonitions that follow are linked by body parts used for good or for ill."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Roland Murphy, *Word Biblical Commentary* vol. 22: *Proverbs* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998), 28.

<sup>12</sup> Brown, Driver and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon unabridged* CD-ROM (Bible Works 8, 1.0, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Leander E. Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible: Proverbs - Sirach* vol. 5 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 60.

<sup>14</sup> Keck, 60.

<sup>15</sup> Murphy, 28.

<sup>16</sup> Keck, 62.

<sup>17</sup> Keck, 60.

## Jesus and the Heavenly Father

NIV Matthew 4:1-11 – Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13

<sup>1</sup>Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came to him and said, “if you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” <sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. <sup>6</sup> “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against the stone.’” <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, “It is written ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test’” <sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. <sup>9</sup> “All this I will give you,” he said, “If you will bow down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” <sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

A significant feature in v. 1 is that God in the Old Testament “led his people in the wilderness<sup>18</sup> where they were tested.”<sup>19</sup> Blomberg asserts that there is a key interaction between the leading of the Holy Spirit and the opposition of Satan.<sup>20</sup> The same Spirit who anoints Jesus in Matt. 3:16, leads him to the place of temptation, but the

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<sup>18</sup> Isaiah 63:14

<sup>19</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary; New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 53.

<sup>20</sup> Craig L. Blomberg, *The New International Version: The American Commentary*, “Matthew,” vol. 22 (Nashville, TN.: Broadman Press, 1992), 83.

Holy Spirit himself does not cause Christ to be tempted.<sup>21</sup> R.V.G Tasker states, “the expression, ‘was lead up of the Spirit’ indicates that it was the divine will that Jesus, now fully conscious of His unique Sonship and fully aware of His vocation to be the ideal Servant of God, should be tempted to be disobedient to the implications of that vocation, and by overcoming such temptation should be able to embark upon a ministry which was to have as its climax, His obedience unto death of the cross.”<sup>22</sup>

Matthew 4:2 states that Jesus fasted and then was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil, where he fasted forty days and forty nights. Moses, in Exodus 34:28, and Elijah in 1 Kings 19:8, both fasted forty days and forty nights, which can then lead to the inference that Jesus was weak at this point because he was hungry.<sup>23</sup> This passage can be used to emphasize an important point to teenagers which is, regardless of how much a person fills himself or herself with the scripture, Satan will attack them at weak moments even when he or she is being “led by the Holy Spirit.” However, in spite of his physical weakness, Christ succeeded where Israel failed and was consistently obedient to the Father where Israel was not.<sup>24</sup> Teenagers should hear the message that they can succeed through God’s power, just as Christ had victory through God’s enablement.

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<sup>21</sup> Blomberg, *The American Commentary*, 83.

<sup>22</sup> R.V.G. Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 52.

<sup>23</sup> Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 33a “Matthew 1-13,” (Columbia: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), 64.

<sup>24</sup> Tasker, 52.

Another disparity between Jesus and the Israelites is that while both were in the desert, Israel demanded bread and died<sup>25</sup> but Jesus did not ask for bread and lived and in so doing, retained his relationship with God.<sup>26</sup> They all had access to the Word of God, however, only Jesus relied on and submitted to it. These are important principles for teens to learn and apply about the importance of ingesting God's Word through study of Matthew 4:4 on the life of Christ to help them address their moral dilemmas. Teenagers must hear sermons and testimonies about relying on and submitting to God in the challenging areas of their lives in order to gain tangible information to live by.

Jesus reiterates the words of the father in Proverbs 4:1 by referencing what is written in God's Words to rebuke Satan as a means of resisting temptation. Jesus' response was based on what the Bible states in the second part of Deut. 8:3.<sup>27</sup> "In context, this passage rehearses God's care for Israel during its forty-year wilderness experience. The first part of Deut. 8:3 alludes to God's purpose in permitting Israel's hunger in the wilderness."<sup>28</sup> Learning God's word is how a person survives.<sup>29</sup> Hagner states, "the words (οὐκ ἐπ' ἄρτῳ μόνῳ), not by bread alone," allow the necessity of bread for life but imply that bread alone is insufficient. Fundamentally important to life, as the next clause reveals, is one's relation to the will of God."<sup>30</sup> It is important to note that

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<sup>25</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 113.

<sup>26</sup> Gaebelein, 113.

<sup>27</sup> David L. Turner, *Matthew: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Publishing Group, 2008), 28.

<sup>28</sup> Turner, 28.

<sup>29</sup> Turner.

<sup>30</sup> Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 65.

Christians will be tempted to meet their physical needs over their spiritual needs, outside of God's way.<sup>31</sup> Jesus was cognizant of his everyday need to rely on God the Father for his daily bread in Matt. 7:9, but he did not use his power like a magician.<sup>32</sup> The lesson here is that it is necessary to daily fill oneself with God's word for spiritual and even physical survival through study as indicated in 2 Timothy 2:15.

In Matthew 4, Satan and Jesus partake in a scripture joust in which the tempter cites Psalms 91:11-12 and tries to entice Jesus to jump from a high point. Satan attempts to get Jesus to display God's ability to preserve life while he justifies the temptation by citing Psalm 91.<sup>33</sup> Next, Satan cites scripture as a way to use the Bible against Jesus in a perverted application of the passage. In v.6 Satan quotes Psalm 91:11-12, however, he leaves out the words "to guard you in all your ways." Gaebelein disagrees with Blomberg and states that "this does not unveil a mistake on Satan's part, but a cunning trap to tempt Jesus so he'd use his sonship against God's promise to protect his own."<sup>34</sup>

Jesus responds in v.7 by citing Deut.6:16 and refuses the act of putting God to the test. Jesus does not dispute the truth of Psalms 91:11-12 but powerfully refutes Satan's erroneous application of the Psalm.<sup>35</sup> However, because Christ's mind was filled with scripture, he was able to refute this Satanic assault with the real truth of the Word of God. "The devil's mistake is to confuse the psalmist's stumbling so as to fall with Jesus"

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<sup>31</sup> Blomberg, *The American Commentary*, 84.

<sup>32</sup> Turner, *Matthew: Baker Exegetical Commentary*, 129.

<sup>33</sup> Blomberg, 84.

<sup>34</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 113.

<sup>35</sup> Dale C. Allison Jr., *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 53.

deliberately jumping off.”<sup>36</sup> Yes, Christians should trust in God for his protection but we should not recklessly test him.<sup>37</sup> Having God’s Word memorized in the correct context enables us to win against the enemy.

In the third temptation of Christ in Matt. 4:8-10, Jesus is taken by Satan (v.9) to an even higher place, a mountain where Satan probably showed Jesus the glorified vision of the world’s kingdoms.<sup>38</sup> However, Satan did not show Christ the vivid scenes of the sin and depravity he came to defeat.<sup>39</sup> “The main clause in this third temptation by the devil contains not an imperative, as in the preceding two verses (vv. 3,6) but a promise: ταῦτα σοι πάντα δώσω, “I will give you all these things.”<sup>40</sup> There is an actual condition to be met because Satan tries to get Christ to worship him, which would have broken the first commandment.<sup>41</sup> The devil attempts to distract Jesus from God’s will by offering something within his very own rights at the price of idolatry.”<sup>42</sup> Satan wants to be worshipped as God, which is implied in Is. 14:13-14 and what Jesus received from the magi, Satan wants from Jesus.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Blomberg, *The American Commentary*, 84.

<sup>37</sup> Allison Jr., *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 53.

<sup>38</sup> Turner, *Matthew: Baker Exegetical Commentary*, 129.

<sup>39</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 114.

<sup>40</sup> Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 68.

<sup>41</sup> Hagner.

<sup>42</sup> Hagner.

<sup>43</sup> Hagner.

Satan uses ruthlessness, cruelty and hate to influence the worldly kingdoms, instead of winning allegiance through self-sacrifice, suffering and love for the kingdom of God.<sup>44</sup> The choice of the wills is highlighted; the will of the Devil or God's, which is a battle in the text and in every heart.<sup>45</sup> In Matt. 4:10, Jesus chooses to do the will of the Father, refutes Satan's enticement and rejects its quoting.<sup>46</sup> The passage in Deuteronomy 6:13 directly refers to idolatry in particular, the Golden Calf incident.<sup>47</sup> "To reject the way of the cross is to be on the side of the devil."<sup>48</sup>

Christ's authoritative rebuke of Satan leaves the enemy no option but to leave. Luke 4:13 states that the devil "...left him until an opportune time." Christ has shown that he is able to resist the devil.<sup>49</sup> Jesus refused to meet his own needs and is now supernaturally fed by the angels (διέκονον "attended," is often used with food such as Elijah was in 1 Kings 19:6-7).<sup>50</sup> Holding fast to God's instruction enables one to thrive and to enjoy God's blessing in life.<sup>51</sup> Filling ourselves with God's word is important because it promises that He will fight our enemies<sup>52</sup> and even destroys Satan's efforts

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<sup>44</sup> Tasker, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*, 55.

<sup>45</sup> Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary*, 68.

<sup>46</sup> Deut. 6:13.

<sup>47</sup> Allison Jr., *Matthew: A Shorter Commentary*, 54.

<sup>48</sup> Allison Jr.

<sup>49</sup> James 4:7.

<sup>50</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 114.

<sup>51</sup> Deut. 4:5.

<sup>52</sup> Deut. 1:30.

through Christ.<sup>53</sup> Understanding the basic teachings of the Bible enables teens to see the plots and traps of the enemy and his overarching goal of destroying their lives. Chapter 4 of the project will present information on how teenagers can speak scriptures as a means of rebuking satanic attacks.

Satan tempts Christians of all ages with the allure of success and alleged guarantees of wealth; however, the cost is too high and requires people to pay far more than they receive from him.<sup>54</sup> Filling our hearts with scripture and godly virtues will enable us to reflect on biblical illustrations where we are encouraged to withstand temptation because in 1Cor. 10:13 it states that, “no temptation has seized you except that which is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”<sup>55</sup> God’s word would alert teens to the dangers they face<sup>56</sup> and to the knowledge that God is their ultimate help in times of crisis.<sup>57</sup>

It is worth noting here that in the New Testament the heart can also represent the sphere of God’s influence on the lives of human beings.<sup>58</sup> It is in the heart that the natural knowledge of God has its seat,<sup>59</sup> and there also in the light of His knowledge, the

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<sup>53</sup> 1 John 3:8.

<sup>54</sup> Blomberg, *The American Commentary*, 85.

<sup>55</sup> 1 Cor. 10:13.

<sup>56</sup> 1 Cor. 10:12.

<sup>57</sup> 1 Cor. 10:13.

<sup>58</sup> 1 Cor. 10:13.

<sup>59</sup> Rom 1:21.

glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ.<sup>60</sup> Zodhiates also states that faith springs up, abides and works in the heart<sup>61</sup> but unbelief in the hearts of men draws them away from faith in God.<sup>62</sup> Additionally, the heart can become the haunt of unclean lusts, which cause men to be blind to God's truth<sup>63</sup> and the same place God sends the Spirit of Christ<sup>64</sup> and even takes up residence.<sup>65</sup>

Zodhiates continues to say that the apex of any person's life is the "necessity of having a heart that is 'right in the sight of God'".<sup>66</sup> It is important to note that such a heart can be obtained through faith in Christ<sup>67</sup> as a new creation<sup>68</sup> whereby the hard heart<sup>69</sup> is transformed into one where God's love has been shed through the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>70</sup> We have observed in the Old and New Testaments that the heart is a vital organ mentally, spiritually and physically.

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<sup>60</sup> 2 Cor. 4:6.

<sup>61</sup> Acts 15:9, Rom. 10:9.

<sup>62</sup> Heb. 3:12.

<sup>63</sup> Rom. 1:24.

<sup>64</sup> Gal. 4:6, Heb. 3:12

<sup>65</sup> Eph. 3:17.

<sup>66</sup> Blomberg, *The American Commentary*, 85.

<sup>67</sup> Acts 15:9.

<sup>68</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17

<sup>69</sup> Rom. 2:5.

<sup>70</sup> Rom. 5:5.

## **The Apostle Paul and Timothy**

Just as the father in Proverbs 4 is teaching his son, so is Paul teaching the Philippian Church<sup>71</sup> that they should practice what they have learned and observed from him. Paul cites truth, righteousness, anything praiseworthy, lovely and pure, as traits the believers should have filled themselves with and draw from in order to live for Christ. Gordon Fee states that, “Paul is telling them not so much to ‘think high thoughts’ but to ‘take into account’ the good they have long known from their own past, as long as it is comfortable to Christ.”<sup>72</sup> From the truth of God's word we have filled our hearts with, we must apply and practice<sup>73</sup> what pleases God.

An example of a young Christian who was directed to fill his mind (i.e. study the Word of God) in order to handle all kinds of concerns is Timothy. The Apostle Paul uses vivid symbolism through the use of three illustrations (a soldier, athlete, and farmer) that Timothy and even twenty-first century Christians would fully understand. These examples were widely recognized at that time in the city of Ephesus where the letter to Timothy had been circulated. (Chapter four will present the need for contemporary illustrations as a way for youth pastors to communicate Biblical truths.)

Paul uses these three examples of individuals who had thorough understanding about their respective occupations. Timothy likewise also had to be filled with knowledge of God's word in order to complete his calling from God. 1 Tim 1:3-4 states, “As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may

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<sup>71</sup> Phil. 4:8-9.

<sup>72</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids, MI.: WMB. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 415.

<sup>73</sup> Fee, 416.

command certain men not to teach false doctrines nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.” Paul knew the city of Ephesus well because during his third missionary journey he had spent three years in Ephesus,<sup>74</sup> which was longer than he had stayed anywhere else.<sup>75</sup>

In his letter to Timothy, Paul is instructing, encouraging and warning Timothy in order that the church at Ephesus would be strong and insulated from false teaching. “Timothy was facing a time of spiritual vacillation and weakness. He may have been questioning his calling or his gifts, or the sufficiency of God’s provision”<sup>76</sup> as insecure young leaders may question their callings. It was not that Timothy needed more of the Lord, instead, he needed to confidently utilize the provision God placed within him.<sup>77</sup> According to Eph. 4:14, Heb. 13:9 and Col. 2:8, people were being fooled by deceptive philosophy, verbal trickery and human tradition, none of which had their origins in Christ.<sup>78</sup>

#### **NIV 2 Timothy 2:1-26**

<sup>1</sup> You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. <sup>3</sup> Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ

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<sup>74</sup> Acts 20:31.

<sup>75</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 398.

<sup>76</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 37.

<sup>77</sup> MacArthur, 37.

<sup>78</sup> MacArthur, 36.

Jesus. <sup>4</sup> No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs- he wants to please his commanding officer. <sup>5</sup> Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor's crown unless he competes according to the rules. <sup>6</sup> The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. <sup>7</sup> Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. <sup>8</sup> Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my gospel, <sup>9</sup> for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. <sup>11</sup> Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; <sup>12</sup> if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us. <sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself. <sup>14</sup> Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. <sup>15</sup> Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. <sup>16</sup> Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. <sup>17</sup> Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup> who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. <sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his." and, "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness." <sup>20</sup> In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. <sup>21</sup> If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument

for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.<sup>22</sup> Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.<sup>23</sup> Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.<sup>24</sup> And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.<sup>25</sup> Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,<sup>26</sup> and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

In the introduction in 2 Tim. 2:1-2, after Paul exhorts Timothy to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," as he often does in his pastoral letters, he admonishes Timothy that he should preserve and transmit the truth.<sup>79</sup> Paul is speaking about the deposit of the Gospel that Timothy should pass on to men who are 'reliable' and qualified to teach others.<sup>80</sup> Timothy would be able to transmit the same biblical truths to others that he pours into himself. William Elwell groups verses 1-13 together and states that, "Christian ministers today are taught the apostolic teachings (the Bible) so that they can teach the people of God."<sup>81</sup> As a youth minister progresses, he/she must be encouraged to study the Bible as Paul tells Timothy.<sup>82</sup> Studying the Bible and memorizing scripture

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<sup>79</sup> 1 Tim. 1:13-14.

<sup>80</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 399.

<sup>81</sup> Walter A. Elwell, *Baker Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1989), 1111.

<sup>82</sup> 2 Tim. 2:15.

will enable Christian youth ministers to make God's word culturally applicable even to the hip-hop subculture.

Paul alludes to a soldier in 2 Tim. 2:3-4, and the message that youth ministers can transmit to their teenage audience in relation to this is that, in order to serve God faithfully, they need a high level of devotion, commitment and discipline.<sup>83</sup> "Roman troops were a model of discipline, and because of that discipline, they were unbeatable."<sup>84</sup> Paul injected the soldier imagery to provide Timothy a superior example of how devoted a Christian must be to Christ.<sup>85</sup> Filling oneself by reading God's word on a daily basis can be a way for teenagers to show commitment and devotion to God rather than having sporadic devotions with him.

In 2 Tim. 2:5, Paul cites the athlete as an illustration on the lifestyle of constant training a Christian must undergo in order to gain spiritual victory.<sup>86</sup> It is from the athlete one can learn how to compete and win according to the rules that God has made.<sup>87</sup> Regular study, practice and application of God's word is the spiritual training a young person needs in order to face life's challenges and eventually be a victorious Christian.

Paul, in 2 Tim. 2:6, also uses the example of the hard-working farmer and points out that the Christian life promises reward for diligent service.<sup>88</sup> The reward could be

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<sup>83</sup> Philip H. Towner, *The IVP New Testament Commentary Series 1-2 Timothy & Titus* (Downers Grove Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 171.

<sup>84</sup> Towner, 171.

<sup>85</sup> Towner.

<sup>86</sup> 1 Cor. 9:25.

<sup>87</sup> Towner, 171.

<sup>88</sup> Towner, 173.

either a reference to financial compensation for the preacher,<sup>89</sup> or a future and spiritual application.<sup>90</sup> In 2 Tim. 2:7, Paul then tells Timothy that he should think and reflect on the implications of the images he just wrote about.<sup>91</sup> F.F. Bruce states that Paul is assured that if Timothy meditated on “spiritual truths” then “divine illumination” would certainly follow.<sup>92</sup> Paul states that if Timothy reflects on the three examples which are also found in 1 Cor. 9:6 and 7:24-27, Timothy would have greater understanding of Paul’s message. He must also pay special attention to the athlete with his regimented training in order to win the prize and so should the Christian who must have unwavering devotion, so that he or she too can win for God. (Chapter four will also discuss daily devotions as a means for teens to strengthen their spiritual lives by having a vibrant relationship with God which results in success in life.)

Next, In 2 Tim. 2: 14-26, Paul speaks to persevering despite false teachers. Paul instructs Timothy to warn the Ephesian Christians about arguing and nitpicking with one another about “phrases” because this was the method and content of the false teachers whose aim was to cause strife.<sup>93</sup> Paul understood that the Ephesian believers were poorly grounded in the faith and could be deceived by charismatic personalities, so arguments did nothing but destroy their faith.<sup>94</sup> In the midst of falsehood and idolatry, Timothy,

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<sup>89</sup> 1 Cor. 9:11.

<sup>90</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The New International Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 1979), 1487.

<sup>91</sup> Elwell, *Baker Commentary on the Bible*, 1111.

<sup>92</sup> Bruce, 1487.

<sup>93</sup> Towner, *New Testament Commentary*, 181.

<sup>94</sup> Towner.

being filled with truth, would be able to combat the myriad of lies being purported by false teachers. Paul's exhortation to Timothy, a young man,<sup>95</sup> and by association to modern teenagers, is to submit their lives to God in an active, conscious effort and God's approval would rest on them.<sup>96</sup>

Paul continues to warn that verbal contamination would take place through godless chatter<sup>97</sup> or opposing doctrine, which was the destructiveness promoted by many, but two false teachers in particular, Hymenaeus and Philetus.<sup>98</sup> Towner asserts that Paul mentions them specifically by name because they were well-known spreaders or teachers of false doctrine.<sup>99</sup> The people of God have not escaped the assault that Satan has against them via false teachers, who according to Jesus "will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect."<sup>100</sup> These two men in Paul's day were the equivalent of rappers who promote hedonism in the twenty first century, in that they are being used by Satan to wipe out God's truth with falsehood.<sup>101</sup> (Lyrics to raps songs, videos and materialism will be examined as a part of chapter four.)

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<sup>95</sup> 2 Tim. 4:12.

<sup>96</sup> 1 Cor. 11:19, 2 Cor. 10:18.

<sup>97</sup> 2 Tim. 2:16.

<sup>98</sup> 2 Tim. 2:17.

<sup>99</sup> 1 Tim. 1:20.

<sup>100</sup> MacArthur, *New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy*, 68.

<sup>101</sup> MacArthur.

Paul is so serious about the false doctrine that he describes it as “gangrene,”<sup>102</sup> which in Paul’s time was used to describe a cancer, which spreads fast and was deadly.<sup>103</sup> They distorted the truth about the resurrection by which they “destroy the faith of some.”<sup>104</sup> Paul used the word “αναρτεπο” (to upset) which portrays the idea of overturning or overthrowing the faith of those who listened to the false teachers.<sup>105</sup> “The Greek verb translated correctly handles,<sup>106</sup> refers to cutting a straight road and suggests straightforward exegesis; this must be the aim of all true teachers of the word. Reading into the text what is clearly not there is of help to nobody but is depressingly common.”<sup>107</sup>

Towner comments that the solid foundation which has been mentioned by Paul in 2 Tim. 2:19 is the church although there are several passages where Christ as the “foundation” is mentioned.<sup>108</sup> The ministry of the apostles and prophets with Christ as the chief cornerstone<sup>109</sup> and the church as the pillar and foundation of truth.<sup>110</sup> “Although some stones might be removed, a foundation or cornerstone would remain secure. Seals

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<sup>102</sup> 2 Tim. 2:17.

<sup>103</sup> MacArthur, *New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy*, 68.

<sup>104</sup> 2 Tim. 2:18.

<sup>105</sup> MacArthur, 68.

<sup>106</sup> 2 Tim. 2:15.

<sup>107</sup> D.A. Carson, R.T. France, J.A. Moyer and G.J. Wehham, *New Bible Commentary* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1307.

<sup>108</sup> 1 Cor. 3:10-11.

<sup>109</sup> Eph. 2:20.

<sup>110</sup> 1 Tim. 3:15.

were often used to attest the witnesses of a document or that merchandise had not been tampered with. Here the seal is the inscription on a cornerstone, Inscribed by the owner or builder.”<sup>111</sup> The seal (Σφάγις) is a sign of God’s ownership he has placed on his church.<sup>112</sup> Youths who are committed to God and have fully surrendered themselves to his control, will not have their faith overturned or contaminated with the messages Satan throws at them according to 2 Tim. 2:19.

Filling ourselves aggressively with God’s word can assure people of their security in Him despite satanic attacks. In regards to 2 Tim. 2:19, “the Lord knows those who are his” and youth ministers can reassure teenagers by telling them that God’s seal of ownership is placed on the church in two ways: 1) every member has the assurance of election,<sup>113</sup> 2) Through personal holiness as found in the portion of 2:19, “Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.”<sup>114</sup> This statement lets us know that each Christian has his or her own part to do in order to keep himself or herself free from the corruption of willful sin. For example, those who did not separate from Korah’s rebellious group in Num. 16:26, 32, were punished with death by God. In 1 Cor. 6:19-20, 1 Pet. 1:15 and Phil. 1:6, we are exhorted that God wants us to be different from unsaved people and He gives us the power to do so.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 627.

<sup>112</sup> MacArthur, *New Testament Commentary: 2 Timothy*, 81.

<sup>113</sup> Num. 16:5, John 10:27-28, 2 Thess. 2:13a, Rom. 8:29-30.

<sup>114</sup> MacArthur, 81.

<sup>115</sup> MacArthur.

Paul then moves to an illustration in 2 Tim. 2:20-21, which reinforces the “foundation” metaphor he uses in 2:19 by mentioning the utensils in the house.<sup>116</sup> The context of this illustration indicates that Paul refers to Hymenaeus and Philetus because he is making a marked distinction between true and false teachers.<sup>117</sup> Paul’s mindset can be observed by the way he describes the purpose for the utensils: “noble” and “ignoble.”<sup>118</sup> At this point, it is no longer a matter of what the utensils are made of, “gold and silver,” “wood and clay,” but only to be “useful to the Master” being “made holy” and “cleansed.”<sup>119</sup> God’s ability to redeem and subsequently use young people for His purposes, no matter what their past entailed, is an important message for minister to impart to teens.

In the last section of 2 Tim. 2:22-26, Paul specifies how God’s servant should behave at all times. It is important to be filled with Godly characteristics so that we can conduct ourselves as God wants us to. Paul instructs Timothy “to flee evil desires of youth.” Teenagers are inundated with sexual message from the media and are tempted to engage in sensual sins. However, they are also prone selfishness, impatience, impetuosity and intolerance, which are the antithesis of godly qualities.<sup>120</sup> The verb “flee” is a present active imperative verb where Paul gives Timothy an imperative or command and Timothy is not given a choice. The mandate has a present tense, which is

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<sup>116</sup> Carson et. al., *New Bible Commentary*, 1307.

<sup>117</sup> Gary W. Demarest, *The Communicator’s Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus* (Waco, Texas: Word Books Publishers, 1984), 267.

<sup>118</sup> Demarest, 267.

<sup>119</sup> Demarest.

<sup>120</sup> Bruce, *The New International Bible Commentary*, 1488.

a continuous action where Timothy himself has to actively avoid ungodly, sexual desires. Paul commands Timothy to continuously flee or avoid desires for unclean sexual intercourse; επιθυμία.<sup>121</sup> It is obvious then that if Timothy sought to have the spiritual fruit of self-control, he would be less prone to fall into sexual sin.

Paul continues to tell Timothy that he must also pursue positive virtues (which is also written in the present tense).<sup>122</sup> Timothy is instructed that he should not only run from “evil desires” but also run to what is godly.<sup>123</sup> This highlights another reason young people should focus on filling themselves with noble and pure things because God has a plan to use them to minister to others.<sup>124</sup> Paul not only tells Timothy what to avoid, but specify to him those virtues he should fill himself with such as righteousness, faith, love and peace. Paul also implores him to connect with others who practice these virtues<sup>125</sup> as a support system. The message of fleeing immorality, as well as, filling one life with spiritual fruit and having a spiritual support system, is an imperative command Christian youths must adhere to in order to overcome the world.

Another reason to fill one’s self with goodness and godliness is seen in Paul’s instruction that Timothy should avoid foolish arguments.<sup>126</sup> Timothy had to promote peace and cohesion among the Ephesian believers because arguments have a way of

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<sup>121</sup> Joseph H. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of The New Testament* (Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 238.

<sup>122</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 405.

<sup>123</sup> 2 Tim. 2:22.

<sup>124</sup> 2 Tim. 2:25.

<sup>125</sup> 2 Tim. 2:22.

<sup>126</sup> 2 Tim. 2:23.

dividing churches.<sup>127</sup> In order for Timothy to lead God's people effectively, being full of self-control and patience would have to be character traits he developed. Filling himself with godliness would enable him to be used by God to address issues in the church appropriately. Pastors and Christians alike "must show tolerance and patience with the difficult, and where "these oppose him" (τοὺς ἀντιδιατιθεμένους) he must correct with a spirit of gentleness,"<sup>128</sup> he has to correct others without a grudge or revenge.<sup>129</sup> If Timothy was extremely spiteful or unforgiving, his ministry could have been destroyed. The Pastor and Christian today must still confront false teaching<sup>130</sup> by leading them with the hope that they will 'come to their senses.' "The verb (ἀνανεφο) literally means "return to soberness" or return to sound thinking. The Pastor and teenage Christian must remember that there are satanic forces that oppose them,<sup>131</sup> so a gentle spirit and fleeing the works of the flesh will help them pursue peace with others. Timothy's example can and should be used to encourage youth to grow in their spiritual lives and to "let no one despise them because of their youth" as they too can be raised up to be examples and leaders within the kingdom of God.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Gaebelein, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 405.

<sup>128</sup> Bruce, *The New International Bible Commentary*, 1488.

<sup>129</sup> 1 Tim. 3:3, Titus 1:7.

<sup>130</sup> Elwell, *Baker Commentary on the Bible*, 1112.

<sup>131</sup> Eph. 6:12.

<sup>132</sup> 1 Tim. 1:4:12.

## Consequences of Refusing Wisdom

There are several examples in the Bible of people who refused to apply sound wisdom and who chose to live according to their own knowledge and/or the pattern of this world. One example of this is shown in the life of King Rehoboam who exemplifies the opposite of a person who uses the wisdom from a wise teacher. In 1 Kings 12:8, King Rehoboam rejected the advice of the elders and listened to young people of his own age which subsequently lead to a rebellion. “The text gives no hint that the younger advisors whom Rehoboam consulted had any official status in Israel. Their unwise suggested answer to the delegation’s demands speaks both of their inexperience and insolence.”<sup>133</sup> Listening to and applying the advice of young advisors who did not have Godly wisdom exposed Rehoboam’s character as both autocratic and incompetent.<sup>134</sup> Rehoboam ignored the wisdom others shared with him and as a consequence, sin and rebellion resulted.<sup>135</sup>

Another example of a person’s failure to apply and follow biblical instruction is found in 1 Kings 11:1-13.<sup>136</sup> Solomon’s heart became corrupted by evil because he took multiple wives by inter-marrying the Canaanites<sup>137</sup> and in so doing, he disobeyed the Lord’s prohibition in Deut. 17:17 about taking multiple wives. He may have originally

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<sup>133</sup> Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* vol. 3: *1 Samuel – 2 Kings* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009), 739.

<sup>134</sup> Simon J. DeVries, *Word Biblical Commentary* vol. 12: *1 Kings* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2003), 159.

<sup>135</sup> Longman & Garland, 740.

<sup>136</sup> Longman & Garland, 728.

<sup>137</sup> Deut. 7:3-4.

taken foreign wives to cement diplomatic relationships<sup>138</sup> however, the Bible states in 1 Kings 11:1 that he “loved” many foreign women from these nations. This indicated that he had an emotional connection to the wrong women and ultimately, he was led astray. It states in verse 4 that “his heart was turned to other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord God, as the heart of David his father had been.”<sup>139</sup> Donald Wiseman says that “divine requirements have been made fully known both in writing and oral teaching (the law),<sup>140</sup> and reiterated by prophets and other means such as theophanies (v.9) that failure to obey God (‘walk in my ways’) justly results in God’s anger.”<sup>141</sup> According to 1 Kings 11:5, Solomon had good teaching but eventually rejected the wisdom of God’s voice and ended up serving other gods. Unfortunately, Solomon did not stay committed to God as a result of his marriages to his wives. In 2 Kings 23:13, “It is a historical fact that he built, or allowed the building of pagan shrines near Jerusalem.”<sup>142</sup> Solomon was intimately connected to people who did not follow what God’s instructions were in Deut. 17:17. There were non-Jewish women in his harem which he had inherited from his father<sup>143</sup> as a result of political alliances sealed through marriage with the neighboring states of Moab, Ammon and Edom.<sup>144</sup> God forbade marriage to foreign

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<sup>138</sup> Longman & Garland, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* vol. 3, 728.

<sup>139</sup> 1 Kings 11:4.

<sup>140</sup> Ex. 20:1-17, 34:28.

<sup>141</sup> Donald J. Wiseman, *An Introduction and Commentary: 1&2 Kings* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993), 136.

<sup>142</sup> DeVries, *Word Biblical Commentary* vol. 12, 143.

<sup>143</sup> 1 Chron. 3:1-9.

<sup>144</sup> Wiseman, 136.

women<sup>145</sup> due to the threat of being led astray and turning to other gods.<sup>146</sup> Solomon's life is a crucial example to use so that teenagers can grasp the important concept of relationships, especially when making choices about whom they would date and may eventually marry.

In Proverbs 4, the eyes of the son should have an unswerving focus on proper goals (which a wise person has), however, the fool lacks this and is easily distracted.<sup>147</sup> "One's vision must be focused, like a navigator who does not lose sight of the star that guides the ship, lest the course be lost and the ship come to a bad end."<sup>148</sup> Through lack of focus, some people fail to keep their relationships, education, and day-to-day activities free from distracting influences much like when God instructed Israel to destroy the people in the Promise Land because they would turn Israel away from Him to serve other gods.

In Deut. 7:1-5, God speaks to His people about driving out other nations from the land he was giving them (v.1). "When the Israelites conquered their new land, they were to destroy the old inhabitants, refusing to enter into any kind of treaty with them, either political or marital."<sup>149</sup> They were told to totally destroy them and to show no mercy to them (v.2). No marriage with the people was allowed (v.3) because "they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the Lord's anger will burn against

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<sup>145</sup> Deut. 7:1-4.

<sup>146</sup> Wiseman, *An Introduction and Commentary*, 135.

<sup>147</sup> Gaebelien, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 405.

<sup>148</sup> Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible: Proverbs*, 60.

<sup>149</sup> Peter C. Craigie, *The New International Commentary on The Old Testament: Book of Deuteronomy* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 177.

you and will quickly destroy you.”<sup>150</sup> Any kind of treaty would be a brazen compromise of God’s command and thereby lead to disaster.<sup>151</sup> God reminds his people that it is (יהוה) Yahweh,<sup>152</sup> the God of Israel, who brought them into the land to possess it. There is no mistaking that God is the one who brings them into the Promised Land and they in turn, must obey instructions when they get into the land.

In the Old Testament, prophets heralded God’s word against the people’s sin, spoke of coming judgments and the hope of his future activity. God had children and youth (teenagers) in mind to receive his word as he tells parents to instruct their children in God’s word at home as well.<sup>153</sup> This verse is a part of a summary Moses gave to the people where children and youth were included in listening to Law regarding Obedience and Love upon which their future blessings of God depended.<sup>154</sup> Moses instructed parents to talk with their children about God’s law at home and at every opportunity in order to instill sound teaching into the next generation.<sup>155</sup>

In Deut. 31:9-13, the law is publicly read every seven years to the people and at particular times, leaders traveled around telling others about God’s revelation to large groups.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Deut. 7:1-4.

<sup>151</sup> Craigie, *Book of Deuteronomy*, 177.

<sup>152</sup> Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon unabridged: CD-ROM* [Bible Works 8, 1.0] 2000.

<sup>153</sup> Deut. 11:19.

<sup>154</sup> Craigie, *Book of Deuteronomy*, 211.

<sup>155</sup> Duane L. Christensen, *Word Biblical Commentary: Deuteronomy* vol. 6a (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 215.

<sup>156</sup> 2 Chron. 15:2, 17:7-9, 35:3.

## **Conclusion**

In summation, the temptation of Christ, the young man in Proverbs, and Paul's instructions to Timothy, are examples of young men who obtained the Word of God through depositing into their hearts direct instructions from their spiritual and earthly fathers. Through the instructions and admonitions given to them through exegetical preaching, young people can find critical life application principles to apply in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in order to live victorious Christian lives.

Looking forward, chapter four will provide practical uses for the sermons youth pastors preach to teenagers about daily utilizing the word of God. In the next chapter, we will take a protracted view of literature that highlights how expository preaching addresses the negative effects of rap music on the morals of teenagers.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE LITERARY PERSPECTIVE

This chapter will take a brief look at the history of rap music and the hip-hop culture from which it originated. In order to do this, lyrics of several rap songs will be reviewed in order to examine the destructive mental, emotional and social impact the words of many of these songs can have on the morals of teenagers. We will also, review publications, statistical data on sexually transmitted infections, as well as, sexual content in the media. Next, some solutions will be provided for the contagion of negative rap music in the lives of young people. Finally, articles, interviews and statistical data will be presented to provide insight into ways that parents, mentors and the Church can instill a biblical worldview in teenagers.

A look at the history of rap music shows that it emerged from the South Bronx of New York City in the 1970's. One person tried to out-speak the other in a "rap battle" competition at a block party, which was a fun way of obtaining bragging rights. In 1970, a group named "The Last Poets" released their debut album, which mixed politically conscious poetry with music who were lauded as the progenitors of rap.<sup>1</sup> Later, in 1973 DJ Kool Herc, a.k.a Clive Campbell, DJ's Bronx Expressway.<sup>2</sup> Herc is known as the father of hip-hop because he "was the first to experiment with break beats, manipulating the instrumental breaks of old funk R&B and soul tracks to form the basis of hip-

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<sup>1</sup> Byron Hurt, "Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats & Rhymes-Timeline," *Independent Lens*, February 20, 2007, accessed September 25, 2014, [http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/hiphop/timeline\\_1970s.html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/hiphop/timeline_1970s.html).

<sup>2</sup> Hurt.

hop.”<sup>3</sup> Herc created what is known today as “sampling,” which is using segments of another artist’s music and adding them to his own songs, via recording. Herc influenced other rap pioneer notables such as Afrika Bambaataa and Grandmaster Flash. In 1974, Bambaataa formed the Universal Zulu Nation, a socially conscious collective of DJs, graffiti artists and break-dancers that included the b-boy crew and the Shaka Zulu Kings. He defined the “four elements” of the nascent hip-hop scene as “DJ-ing, break-dancing, graffiti art and MC-ing.”<sup>4</sup> Also, in 1975, two epic events took place in the art of DJ-ing; Grandmaster flash pioneers a new DJ mixing style by connecting two different songs and DJ Grand Wizard Theodore invented “scratching” which entailed using the record player as a musical instrument by nudging a record under the needle.<sup>5</sup> By 1977, being an MC (rapper) began to eclipse DJ-ing. Subsequently, in 1979, the Sugar Hill Gang recorded the first commercial rap recording, “Rappers Delight,” which exposed many in America to rap for the first time. This song later reached #36 on the Billboard Hot 100 (a huge feat by 1970’s standards).<sup>6</sup> To further illustrate the emergence of rap as a force in the music industry, in 1980, Kurtis Blow released his best-selling album, “The Breaks,” which opened more doors for rap artists as Blow became the first rapper to appear on national TV on Soul Train.<sup>7</sup> Eventually, a new style of music emerged called new wave and acts arose such as groups like Blondie who had a single titled, “Rapture,”

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<sup>3</sup> Hurt, “Beyond Beats & Rhymes.”

<sup>4</sup> Hurt.

<sup>5</sup> Hurt.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Adaso, “A Brief History of Hip-Hop,” *About.com*. 2014, accessed September 25, 2014, <http://rap.about.com/od/rootsofraphiphop/p/rootsofrap.html>

<sup>7</sup> Hurt.

which featured singer Debbie Harry and rapper Kurtis Blow, which continued rap's advance into mainstream music.<sup>8</sup> Some notable names and groups in the history of rap include DJ Kool Herc, Afrika Bambaataa, Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, Curtis Blow, Run DMC, LL Cool J, Tupac Shakur, Rakim, Queen Latifah, MC Lyte, Drake, Tribe Called Quest, Young Money and Jay Z. Many of these names may have been forgotten but for some who grew up listening to them, they are considered to be icons with whom one could identify specific periods in urban life.

"Rap's common designation as 'CNN for black people' may result from these rap icons evolving from simply rappers to 'griots'. Griots were respected African oral historians and praise-singers who were the keepers and purveyors of knowledge, which included tribal history, family lineage, and news of births, deaths, and wars."<sup>9</sup> The 1980's brought the advent of conscious rap where Afro-centrism, cultural pride, social awareness and political activism was ignited by such groups as Public Enemy whose songs featured the ideology and quotes of civil rights icons such as Marcus Garvey, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X and Nelson Mandela.

However, in the 1990's a sub-genre of rap music called "gangsta" rap emerged. Dictionary.com describes "gangsta rap" as a sub-genre of rap which became very popular in the 80s and 90s. It described harsh realities of life for black males living in poor areas of the U.S. It was later protracted to include messages of violence and hatred for

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<sup>8</sup> Hurt, "Beyond Beats & Rhymes."

<sup>9</sup> Beckey Blanchard, "The Social Significance of Rap & Hip-Hop Culture; Poverty & Prejudice: Media and Race," *"Ethics of Development in a Global Environment (EDGE)"*, accessed September 25, 2014, [http://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/poverty\\_\\_prejudice/mediarace/socialsignificance.html](http://web.stanford.edu/class/e297c/poverty__prejudice/mediarace/socialsignificance.html).

Caucasians, females and anyone who disliked the genre.<sup>10</sup> “Some believe that as commercial and ‘gangsta’ rap emerged, so did lyrics that glorify drugs, violence and misogyny. Many artists who choose instead to feature socially conscious and politically oriented lyrics are considered alternative or underground.”<sup>11</sup> Moreover, rap has evolved from its inception and “has grown to encompass more than just rap music; hip-hop has created a culture that incorporates ethnicity, art, politics, fashion, technology and urban life.” Previously, it was played only at block parties but has now transitioned into an international, multi-billion dollar phenomenon.<sup>12</sup>

Given some of the lyrics, which are being played on the radio, CDs and television, it is interesting to discover that “in 1981, a new visual dimension was added to music lyrics with the founding Music Television (MTV). MTV was the first all-music television network; it merged music and pictures in a new commercial media form.”<sup>13</sup> From its inception, MTV grew from being watched in 27 million homes in 1986, to over 52 million by 1990, and presently it has reached 411 million subscribers in 164 countries.<sup>14</sup> The success of MTV gave rise to similar television networks such as (BET) Black Entertainment Television, (CMT) Country Music Television and (VH-1) Video

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<sup>10</sup> Urban dictionary.com, “*Gangsta rap*,” accessed April 25, 2008, <http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=gangsta+rap>.

<sup>11</sup> Tavis Smiley, “Examining Hip Hop Culture,” *PBS.org*, last modified June 6, 2013, accessed September 25, 2015, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissimley/features/examining-hip-hop-culture>.

<sup>12</sup> Smiley.

<sup>13</sup> Sarah Ashby MD and Michael L. Rich. “Video Killed the Radio Star: The Effects of Music Videos on Adolescent Health,” *Adolescent Medicine Clinics* 16 (2005): 371, accessed September 12, 2014, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.admecli.2005.02.001>.

<sup>14</sup> Ashby and Rich, 371.

Hits-1, which broadcast a variety of music genres to different viewers. The combination of music with a visual experience may have a synergistic effect on adolescents' attitudes once the music is initially heard. The power of the video is further highlighted by research which "shows that after watching music videos, the visual image persists with the viewer even when that individual is listening to an audio-only version of a song; most music video viewers 'always' or 'frequently' thought of content from the music video when listening to the corresponding music."<sup>15</sup>

The catchiness of the beat, popularity of the rapper, and notoriety of the song just may influence how much a teenager will listen to a particular song. When adolescents and teenagers are enthralled with rap icons, they will be more likely to increase how much they view the artist's videos. "When asked why they watched MTV in one study, adolescents listed several main reasons, including the goal of watching particular groups, singers, and concerts along with being entertained."<sup>16</sup> Part of the danger is that, "children are influenced by media because they learn through observing, imitating and making behaviors their own. Children younger than eight years old cannot differentiate between fantasy and reality and are vulnerable to adopting and learning attitudes and behaviors portrayed by entertainment media."<sup>17</sup> In 2000, the sales charts were swept, as was the

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<sup>15</sup> Ashby and Rich, "Video Killed the Radio Star," 373.

<sup>16</sup> Ashby and Rich.

<sup>17</sup> Miriam E. Bar-on MD, Daniel D. Brouthton MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, Alberto Gedissman MD, M. Rosario Gonzalez de Rivas MD, Michael O. Rich MD, and Donald L. Shifrin MD. "Media Violence," *American Academy of Pediatrics: Pediatrics* Vol. 108, No. 5 (November 1, 2001): 1222-1226, accessed September 12, 2014, doi.org/10.1542/peds.108.5.1222.

MTV Video Music Awards, by songs that featured lyrics about rape and murder which were accompanied by sound effects.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, it is also noteworthy to point out that “Corporate America’s infatuation with rap has increased as the genre’s political content has withered.”<sup>19</sup> Some rappers have struggled to maintain the purity of the art form and some do as their record labels wish, which is to write lyrics that sell.<sup>20</sup>

Today, there are a plethora of mediums with which one can hear music such as television, CD’s, Internet, You Tube, iTunes, Podcasts, music videos and radio. This excess of mediums of communication and dissemination of ideas have in many instances been used to express great ideas, but unfortunately, it has also been used to make money which in the rap industry, means the use of explicit lyrics. The end result is that teenagers can be and are influenced through the media and in particular, music. As pleasurable as music and videos shared from one generation to another has been, the fact is, music is one area in which teenagers are able to define a world of their own away from adults. “A concern to many interested in the development and growth of teenagers is the negative and destructive themes of some kinds of music (rock, rap, hip-hop, etc.), including best selling albums promoted by major recording companies.”<sup>21</sup> The grave harm that can occur to teenagers from a medium with which they find so much

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<sup>18</sup> Bar-on, et. al., “Media Violence,” 1224.

<sup>19</sup> Blanchard, “The Social Significance of Rap & Hip-Hop Culture.”

<sup>20</sup> Blanchard.

<sup>21</sup> “The Influence of Music and Music Videos,” *American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry: Facts for Families* no. 40, updated July 2004, accessed May 9, 2008, [http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts\\_for\\_families/the\\_influence\\_of\\_music\\_and\\_music\\_videos](http://www.aacap.org/cs/root/facts_for_families/the_influence_of_music_and_music_videos)

enjoyment, is caused in large part by the companies who promote the music. While, the tones, harmony, sounds and beats of the music are not necessarily the issue, the themes of the lyrics and images of the videos that accompany the songs is where the trouble lies. Many rap songs and their accompanying videos are, “advocating and glamorizing abuse of drugs and alcohol, (have) pictures and explicit lyrics presenting suicide as an alternative or solution, (show) graphic violence and sex which focuses on control, sadism, masochism, incest, children devaluing work and violence toward women.”<sup>22</sup> To further compound the problem, Randy Dotinga stated in 2005 that “rap music singers referred to substance use in a whopping 77 percent of songs.”<sup>23</sup> Dotinga stated that one study done at the University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine, indicated that “279 of the best-selling songs in 2005, based on Billboard magazine charts, in five genres they considered popular with kids (rap, country, R&B/hip-hop) songs did.”<sup>24</sup>

Through listening to these songs, teenagers find themselves in a world where they are separated from adults through the songs’ lyrics, images and themes, which according to the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, promote immorality, violence, drug use and even killing one’s self as a way to deal with life issues.<sup>25</sup>

To further highlight the point, Sid Kirchheimer stated in the March 3, 2003, issue of WebMD, in an article entitled, *Does Rap Put Teens at Risk*, that “teens who spend

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<sup>22</sup> “The Influence of Music and Music Videos.”

<sup>23</sup> Randy Dotinga, “One-Third of Popular Songs Refer to Substance Abuse Rap and Country Top the List with References to Alcohol, drugs, Study Finds,” *U.S. News & World Report*, November 8, 2007, accessed April 23, 2008, <http://health.usnews.com>.

<sup>24</sup> Dotinga.

<sup>25</sup> “The Influence of Music and Music Videos.”

more time watching the sex and violence depicted in the 'reel' life of 'gangsta' rap music videos are more likely to practice these behaviors in real life."<sup>26</sup> It would seem inconceivable that young people would reenact the actions they see on television and in particular music videos, but according to Kirchheimer, this seems to be what is happening. The study on which Kirchheimer's report was based, took place over the course of a year. "After studying 522 black girls between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, from urban, lower socioeconomic neighborhoods, researchers found that compared to those who never or rarely watched these videos, the girls who viewed these "gangsta" videos for at least 14 hours per week, were far more likely to practice numerous destructive behaviors."<sup>27</sup> The results showed that the girls who listened to this type of music were "three times more likely to hit a teacher, over 2.5 times more likely to get arrested, twice as likely to have multiple sexual partners and 1.5 times more likely to get a sexually transmitted disease, use drugs, or drink alcohol."<sup>28</sup> Kirchheimer also stated that what was particularly alarming about the findings, is that there was not an association with violence alone, but also a correlation with a string of negative behaviors.<sup>29</sup> The teenage girls in this particular study watched various types of music videos, however, gangsta' rap music was the most popular amongst the girls who practiced the most destructive behaviors.

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<sup>26</sup> Sid Kirchheimer, "Does Rap Put Teens at Risk?" *WebMD*, March 3, 2003, accessed May 9, 2008 <http://www.webmd.com/baby/news/20030303/does-rap-put-teens-at-risk>.

<sup>27</sup> Kirchheimer.

<sup>28</sup> Kirchheimer.

<sup>29</sup> Kirchheimer.

One way of explaining how listening to music can set a mood, whether it be sad, excited, angry, happy or contemplative, can be explained scientifically according to Elizabeth Landau of CNN. In her “This is Your brain on Music” report, she states that “whether you are rocking out to Macklemore & Ryan Lewis in your car or reading with Bach in your bedroom, music has a special ability to pump us up or calm us down.”<sup>30</sup> Landau stated that there were three studies published on this subject in April of 2013 to dissect the exact chemical processes. The three studies indicated that there are benefits to patients listening to music prior to surgery because many experienced fewer levels of the stress hormone, cortisol. Part of the explanation for music’s medicinal effect was that the patient had to enjoy the type of music they listened to.<sup>31</sup> Landau’s report further states that a part of the brain area called the superior temporal gyros, is intimately involved in the decision a person makes when deciding which genre of music they will listen to because it’s involved in storing templates from what you’ve heard before.<sup>32</sup> Landau stated that, “a person who has heard a lot of jazz music, is more likely to appreciate a given piece of jazz music more than someone with a lot less exposure.”<sup>33</sup>

Landau also did a report titled, “How the Brain makes Moral Judgments.” Her report showed that there is a specific network of brain regions involved in mediating moral judgment. Her report was based on a study which looked at “three brain structures—the medial prefrontal cortex, the posterior cingulate and angular gyrus on the

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<sup>30</sup> Elizabeth Landau, “This is Your Brain on Music,” *CNN Health*, last updated April 15, 2013, accessed August 12, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/04/15/health/brain-music-research/index.html>.

<sup>31</sup> Landau.

<sup>32</sup> Landau.

<sup>33</sup> Landau.

left and right side—which play a central role in the emotional processes that influence personal moral decision making.”<sup>34</sup> Her report also indicated that the “prefrontal cortex and amygdala, is the region where the brain recognizes that an act is immoral and translates that recognition into behavioral inhibition.”<sup>35</sup> One inference which may be made through this study that connects teenagers listening to rap music with immoral lyrics and enjoying the music, can be due to the frequency which they listen to it and to the ensuing influence it has on their brain so that immoral lyrics transmit to immoral actions. Landau also states, “what determines moral blame is not how bad the outcome is, but mostly what was going on in the minds of the actors.”<sup>36</sup> The question to be asked is, whose moral judgments are affected by which factors under what circumstances since it’s possible to manipulate moral judgment by directly intervening in brain processes?<sup>37</sup>

Given the studies that indicate that music affects the brain, the way people feel and also their behavior, it can be asserted that rap music is a force to be reckoned with in this era. Whether it is teenagers in urban cities or in the suburbs, rap has a wider audience than just those young people living in the inner cities of America and therefore, it cannot be ignored. History has shown us that in the 1920’s blues and jazz crossed over when “white people rushed to Harlem to hear the music.”<sup>38</sup> Also, in the 1940’s, black

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<sup>34</sup> Elizabeth Landau, “How Your Brain Makes Moral Judgments,” *CNN Health*, March 27, 2014, accessed August 12, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/26/health/brain-moral-judgments/index.html>.

<sup>35</sup> Landau.

<sup>36</sup> Landau.

<sup>37</sup> Landau.

<sup>38</sup> Kevin Powell, “Hip-Hop is The Most Important Youth Culture on The Planet,” *Time.com*, September 22, 2000, accessed September 25, 2014, <http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,859>.

musicians created a musical sound called bebop, which is viewed as the forerunner of rap music, that crossed over as whites listeners gravitated towards the music of artists like Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker and began adopting its attitudes as well as its jargon and style of dress.<sup>39</sup> The edginess and rebelliousness of rock-and-roll found its origins through such artists as Big Mama Thornton and Louis Jordan and was perfected by Little Richard. It then crossed over to the larger American culture through others such as Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly.<sup>40</sup>

Kevin Powell states in his September 22, 2000 article, “Hip-Hop is the Most Important Culture on the Planet,” that due to the power of the market, it determines what products and how much people buy. Additionally, he states that rap is a billion-dollar business, which is the blues of the working poor and continues to cross over to contemporary society.<sup>41</sup>

Teenagers who listen to rap music with lyrics that are degrading and which makes references to elicit sex and misogyny could be seen as putting themselves at risk.

“Although listening to music may often be only a secondary activity for many youth, the sexual references in many popular songs may be difficult to ignore because the language used to describe sex has become increasingly direct.”<sup>42</sup> A study was done which showed that “listening to music with degrading sexual lyrics is related to advances in a range of

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<sup>39</sup> Powell, “Hip-Hop is The Most Important Youth Culture.”

<sup>40</sup> Powell.

<sup>41</sup> Powell.

<sup>42</sup> Steve C. Martino, Rebecca L. Collins, Marc N. Elliott, Amy Stachman, David E. Kanouse, and Sandra H. Berry “Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music Lyrics and Sexual Behavior Among Youth,” *Pediatrics :American Academy of Pediatrics* (2006): 430-440, Official Journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics, accessed September 12, 2014. doi:10.1542/peds.2006-0131,1019.

sexual activities among adolescents, whereas this does not seem to be true of other song lyrics.”<sup>43</sup> The article also states that sex is a healthy part of life and developing an interest in it is natural, however, adding degrading messages to minds while they learning about sexuality, creates inappropriate ideas of sex and starts an earlier onset of initiation of intercourse for teenagers.<sup>44</sup>

To further highlight the point, the journal states that, “adolescents who listen to a lot of music containing these objectifying and limiting characterizations of sexuality, progress more quickly in their sexual behavior, regardless of their race or gender.”<sup>45</sup> The more teenagers listen to misogynistic, sexually exploitative and degrading music, the more inappropriate behaviors teenagers are apt to display. What is defined as degrading? The study defined degrading in its coding scheme as “lyrics, which depicted sexually insatiable men pursuing women valued only as sex objects. These portrayals objectify and degrade women in ways that are obvious but do the same to men by depicting them as sex-driven studs whose individual desires are subsumed in their gender role.”<sup>46</sup> The lyrics oftentimes promote acceptance of women as sexual objects and men as pursuers of sexual conquest. Teenagers who were repeatedly exposed to these types of lyrics were found to see such portrayals as normative.<sup>47</sup> A part of the hidden danger is that adolescent girls can come to see themselves in the submissive role and expect to be treated with

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<sup>43</sup> Martino et. al., “Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music,” 431.

<sup>44</sup> Martino et al.

<sup>45</sup> Martino et al.

<sup>46</sup> Martino et al.

<sup>47</sup> Martino et al.

disrespect, whereas, the boys could interpret such messages as “boys being boys.”<sup>48</sup> It is interesting to note that according to social cognitive theory, listening to artists sing about engaging in sex without experiencing any negative consequences, leads teens to perceive the behavior as appropriate and pleasant, and increases the likelihood that they will imitate the behavior.<sup>49</sup> According to this theory, Kanye West, Wiz Kalifah and 2Chains, who purport via their rap songs and videos that they have multiple sex partners with whom they have no commitment, consequences nor conscience, has influenced teenagers to be blithe in the area of morals and in particular their sexuality. For example songs such as the songs “Girl You’re a Freak,” or “magic stick” make references to sex without marriage, love or commitment.

In light of the influence of music on the brain, behavior, sexual thoughts and sexual conquests, it is important to look at some of the degrading lyrics that teenagers listen to. According to elite-daily.com, there is documentation of the fifteen most misogynist lines in the history rap music. I will list several of them to elucidate the types of lyrics teenagers listen to and recite without giving thought to their content. The first song is by Big L and states, “so we could never be a couple hun, f@#\$ love, all I got for hoes is a h#@! &%%\$ and bubble gum.”<sup>50</sup> Another rapper named Bizarre blithely stated that, for “my little sister’s birthday, she’ll remember me. For a gift, I had ten of my boys

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<sup>48</sup> Martino et al., “Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music.”

<sup>49</sup> Martino et al.

<sup>50</sup> Doran Miller-Rosenberg, “The 15 Most Misogynist Lines in Rap History,” *Elite Daily.com*, Music News, (October 16, 2013), accessed August 12, 2014, <http://elitedaily.com/music/music-news/the-20-most-misogynist-lines-in-rap-history>.

take her virginity.”<sup>51</sup> Lil Kim infamously stated in her collaboration with 50 Cent on her Labella Mafia CD, “When it comes to sex don’t test my skills ... Guys wanna wife me and give me the ring. I’ll do it anywhere, anyhow; I’m down for anything.”<sup>52</sup> The final lyricist is the infamous Eminem who stated, “Slut, you think I won’t choke no whore, till the vocal chords don’t work in her throat no more.”<sup>53</sup> Teenagers listening to such lyrics repeatedly are faced with a formidable force, which as research suggests, will have a major influence over their thinking and behavior.

One phenomenon, which is of concern, is that “because children have high levels of exposure to media, it has greater access and time to shape young people’s attitudes and actions than do parents or teachers, replacing them as educators, role models, and is the primary sources of information about the world and how one behaves.”<sup>54</sup> One survey in 10 U.S. Southeastern cities of 2760, 14-16- year-olds, indicated that the participants listened to music an average of 40 hours a week.<sup>55</sup> It was remarkable that children in the U.S. between 2 to 18 years old spend on average per day, 6 hours and 32 minutes using media, including television, commercial or self-recorded videos, video games, movies, print, radio, recorded music, computer and the Internet, which is more time spent on any

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<sup>51</sup> Miller-Rosenberg, “15 Most Misogynist Lines in Rap History.”

<sup>52</sup> Martino, et al., “Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music,” 431.

<sup>53</sup> Miller-Rosenberg.

<sup>54</sup> Miriam E. Bar-on, et al., “Media Violence.”

<sup>55</sup> Marjorie Hogan MD, Miriam Bar-on MD, Lillian Beard MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, H. James Holroyd MD, S. Norman Sherry MD, Donald Shiffrin MD, and Victor Strasburger MD. “Impact of Music Lyrics and Music Videos on Children and Youth.” *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* vol. 98, no. 6 (December 1996), 1219.

other activity, except for sleeping.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, it was noted that, “recent surveys show that white adolescents in the United States spend on average 5 to 6 hours a day with some form of mass media and black youth spend even more.”<sup>57</sup>

This exposure to images and lyrics through the genre of music can be statistically staggering. The amount of time adolescents and teenagers spend listening to music, watching television or surfing the Internet, with the addition of sexualized programming of rap music, can be shocking, given that in the “American media are thought to be the most sexually suggestive in the Western Hemisphere.”<sup>58</sup> Movies, music and television have a high content of sexual messages, which are explicitly sexual through images, lyrics and dialogue.<sup>59</sup> The link between the content of some rap songs and videos and media exposure of teenagers and adolescents to “sex-plicit” messages can be made. “Although early sexual activity may be caused by a variety of factors, media is believed to play a significant role. The media also represent the most easily remediable influence on young people and their sexual attitudes and behaviors.”<sup>60</sup> The age of the viewers and content of the music, videos and CDs, with the component of time spent engaged with such concerning information, has lead to sexualized learning. There are numerous

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<sup>56</sup> Bar-on et. al., “Media Violence,” 1223.

<sup>57</sup> Brown Jane D., Kelly Ladin L’Engle, Carol J. Pardun, Guang Guo, Kristin Kennevy and Christine Jackson, “Sexy media Matter: Exposure to Sexual Content in Music, Movies, Television, and Magazines Predicts Black and White Adolescents’ Sexual Behavior,” *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* (2006): 117, 1018-1027, accessed September 12, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.2005-1406, 1019.

<sup>58</sup> Bar-on MD, Miriam E., Daniel D. Broughton MD, Susan Buttross MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, Alberto Gedissman MD, M. Rosario Gonzalez de Rivas MD, Michael Rich MD, and Donald L. Shifrin MD. “Sexuality, Contraception and The Media.” *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* vol 107 no. 1 (January 1, 2001): 191-194. Accessed September 12, 2014. doi:10.1542/peds.107.1.191.

<sup>59</sup> Bar-on, et al., 192.

<sup>60</sup> Bar-on, et al.

studies done on the subject of the influence television has on the sexual attitudes of adolescents.<sup>61</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics article on Media Education states that the average adolescent and teenage viewer is exposed to greater than 14,000 sexual references every year, yet a small portion provide accurate depiction of responsible sexual behavior and information about birth control, abstinence or the risks of sexual activity.<sup>62</sup>

With the preponderance of sexual messages, lyrics and information packaged into a form of musical genre which teenagers and adolescents like, such as rap, it is no surprise that “adolescents have the highest STD rates. Approximately one-fourth of sexually active adolescents become infected with an STD each year, accounting for 3 million cases, and people under the age of 25 account for two thirds of all STDs in the U.S.”<sup>63</sup> The link between the effects of rap music on the sexual morals of teenagers seems strong, given the amount of time teens listen to rap music and the fact that they are still very impressionable and can be persuaded to subconsciously make poor decisions under its powerful influence. One of the concerning studies done shows that, “according to the most recent date, 61% of all high school seniors have had sexual intercourse, about half are currently sexually active, and 21% have had 4 or more partners.”<sup>64</sup> If rap is as powerful an influence on teenagers as it seems, it has the ability to influence young people to engage in sexual activity long before they can make responsible decisions.

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<sup>61</sup> Bar-on, et al., “Sexuality, Contraception and The Media,” 192.

<sup>62</sup> Hogan, et al., “Media Education,” 342.

<sup>63</sup> Bar-on, et al.

<sup>64</sup> Bar-on, et al.

Entrance into early sexual intercourse among American adolescents is a major public health concern with numerous factors, one of which is the media's role.<sup>65</sup> Another inadvertent repercussion of teenagers having sex is that of sexual abuse. One study showed that "74% of female adolescents who had sex before age fourteen reported that it was involuntary."<sup>66</sup> Another study showed that at least 10% of adolescents who engaged in sexual intercourse stated that it was not consensual.<sup>67</sup> Yet another study found that, "the younger a girl is at first sexual intercourse, the greater the chance that she has had involuntary or forced sex."<sup>68</sup> With the preponderance of sexual lyrics in rap songs, coupled with the number of hours teenagers and adolescents listen to or watch misogynistic messages, it is disturbing to discover how much the sexual attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of young people are being influenced by this music.

To be clear, the whole blame for the sexual practices of sexually active teens cannot be placed on rap music lyrics, however, it is an important factor. Kjerstern Olinney and Linda Klepacki state that, "5% of twelve-year-olds, 10% of thirteen year olds, and 20% of fourteen year olds are sexually active."<sup>69</sup> Many teenagers do not understand that some of the rap music they listen to put harmful information in their minds which influences their thinking and eventually their behavior. The teenagers'

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<sup>65</sup> Bar-on, et al., "Sexuality, Contraception and The Media," 192.

<sup>66</sup> Bar-on, et al., 191.

<sup>67</sup> Bar-on, et al.

<sup>68</sup> Bar-on, et al.

<sup>69</sup> Kjersten Olinney and Linda Klepacki, "Teen Sexual Behavior Quick Fact," *Family Facts.org.*, *Focus on Social Issues: Abstinence Policy*, March 2005, accessed September 12, 2014. <http://citizenlink.org>.

exposure to sexual content in music and other forms of media accelerates sexual activity and increases their risk of engaging in early sexual intercourse.<sup>70</sup> There was a study done which showed that young people “ages twelve to seventeen who watched TV with more sexual content were more likely than those who saw shows with less sexual content to have engaged in more advanced sexual behavior, as well as, sexual intercourse, up to a year later.”<sup>71</sup>

Another factor, which other studies support, is the role that parents, religious or not, play in shaping the thoughts, attitudes and ideals of adolescents and teenagers regarding sex. A teenager’s moral compass shows up in the type of sexual choices they make which their parents or a mentor’s role in their lives heavily influences. “Teens with Christian parents are more likely to abstain from sex for fear of what their parents would think than teens with nonreligious parents.”<sup>72</sup> The same study showed that fear of parents was a factor which influenced girls to be more hesitant about sex than boys- 71% vs. 59% or their peers 28% vs. 13%.<sup>73</sup> When discussing parental awareness and involvement with their children, parents are “more likely to talk about sex with daughters than with sons and only 30 percent of parents of sexually active fourteen-year-olds believe their children have ever had sex. Though teens talk about sex more with their friends than their parents, they learn the most about sex from their parents.”<sup>74</sup> Despite the allure of immoral lyrics, the research highlighted several factors that impact teens’

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<sup>70</sup> Jane D. Brown, “Sexy Media Matter,” 1019.

<sup>71</sup> Brown, et al.

<sup>72</sup> Oligney and Klepacki, “Teen Sexual Behavior Quick Facts.”

<sup>73</sup> Oligney and Klepacki.

<sup>74</sup> Oligney and Klepacki.

decisions to engage in sexual activity. Parent-adolescent communication is one area which shows that adolescents whose parents have open dialogue with them about the moral and social consequences about being sexually active tend to be less likely to engage in sexual intercourse.<sup>75</sup> Another aspect that has an impact is parents monitoring, which shows that children who are more closely monitored are less likely to become active sexually when they are teenagers.<sup>76</sup> This underscores the important role parents have in counteracting the negative effects of rap music on the morals of teenagers. With the preponderance of statistics about sexually active teenagers, sexually transmitted diseases and amount of sexual content in the media as a whole, parents can take comfort in the fact that they do have an impact on their children's moral choices. In order to dispel the lie that "everybody is having sex," parents can continue to show teenagers that it is just not true.

One study addressed the topic of adults' thoughts on teenage sex and abstinence, which indicated that, "seventy-nine percent of parents believe that sex should be linked to love, intimacy and commitment and that these qualities are most likely to occur within marriage."<sup>77</sup> Another study discovered that eighty-five percent of parents believe abstinence from sexual activity is best for teens, and fifty-seven percent of parents believe that it has harmful psychological and physical effects.<sup>78</sup> Given such research on the influence parents have on their children's attitudes and the ideas the parents have

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<sup>76</sup> "Parents' Influence on Adolescents' Sexual Behavior," *FamilyFacts.org* (2014), The Heritage Foundation, <http://www.familyfacts.org/briefs/42/parents-influence-on-adolescents-sexual-behavior>, accessed August 27, 2014.

<sup>77</sup> Oligney and Klepacki, "Teen Sexual Behavior Quick Facts."

<sup>78</sup> Oligney and Klepacki.

regarding sexual activity, home training is not a hopeless cause in the battle against the effects of sex-explicit rap lyrics, in fact, it may be its greatest defense. It cannot be over emphasized that these studies all confirm that parental engagement with teens is necessary to counteract the influence of the negative effect of the media and sexualized rap music and videos.

In chapter two, fathers speaking to their sons, were portrayed as the main teacher of their children. The parental influence in the biblical context was paramount and in this section and we will see how that remains to be a quintessential element in teenagers' ability to make good moral decisions.

There are several parental factors which contribute to the amount of time teens spend engaged in media such as television, listening to Cd's and/or surfing the Internet. These factors include parental work schedule, the parent-adolescent collaboration and parental monitoring. Han, Miller and Waldfogel conducted a survey examining the effects of parental work schedules on adolescent risky behaviors (ages thirteen and fourteen) and the mechanisms, which can help explain them. The "structural equation modeling suggests that mothers who worked more often at night spent significantly less time with children and had lower quality of home environments, and these mediators were significantly linked to adolescent risky behaviors."<sup>79</sup> In short, the parents' work schedules aided the children's risky behaviors because the parents were not available to properly supervise the children.

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<sup>79</sup> Wen-Jui Han, Daniel P. Miller, and Jane Waldfogel, "Parental Work Schedules and Adolescent Risky Behaviors," *Developmental Psychology* vol. 46 no. 5 (Sep 2010): 1245-1267, accessed September 3, 2014, doi:10.1037/a0020178.

The survey also showed that there were different effects resulting from evening work schedules such as nontraditional work schedules for mothers and fathers. It indicates that boys who spent less time with their mothers suffered less maternal closeness and experienced lower quality of home environment.<sup>80</sup>

Due to the fact that transitioning from childhood to adolescence is a critical period, time with a parent is key, but more important, is the quality of the parent-adolescent relationship in helping the child adapt to new phases in life and negotiate the messages in the sexualized rap lyrics, videos and television. “Although most families are able to manage this developmental transition smoothly, the task of establishing a relationship in which the adolescent has greater equality with parents can be difficult and can result in negative effects.”<sup>81</sup> The fact that parents are the authority figures, and not the children, is the major underpinning of the parent-child relationship. Helping parents and children set those boundaries and maintain them without losing the closeness of the relationship is important to the development of individualization and warmth is important to the collaboration between the two.<sup>82</sup> The amount of time parents spend with their children and the quality of the child-parent relationship seems to be very important as it is not only the time together, but also how the two inter-relate.

A way to guard children from having unsupervised time where they can engage in activities that are risky or detrimental to their moral fiber, is for parents to be present and

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<sup>80</sup> Han, Miller, and Waldfogel, “Parental Work Schedules,” 1245

<sup>81</sup> Ryan M. Beveridge and Cynthia A. Berg, “Parent Adolescent Collaboration: An Interpersonal Model for Understanding Optimal Interactions,” *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* vol 10. no. 1 (March 2007), accessed September 3, 2014, doi:10.1007/s10567-006-001 5z.

<sup>82</sup> Beveridge and Berg.

monitor activities. Also, parents should educate themselves about the media, including the most popular songs and artists, to even reading the lyrics of rap songs. Parents educating themselves as to what children are watching and/or listening to, is a simple but effective, common sense approach to addressing negative rap's influence on teenagers.<sup>83</sup> There seems to be a consensus that the two important aspects of parental monitoring are, adolescents' perceptions of their parents' knowledge about whom they are with and where they are spending time when they are not at home or attending school.<sup>84</sup> "The greater sense the adolescent gets that his or her parent(s) are not monitoring them, the greater the chance that the teen will participate in risky behaviors, take sexual risks and participate in substance use."<sup>85</sup>

Spending time with their children is not the only factor which is important for a teenager to make safe choices but they must understand that their parents are well informed as to their whereabouts and to the peers they associate with.

Nancy A. Gonzalez presented the workshop, "Family Interventions to Prevent or Reduce Adolescent Risk Behavior" on May 28, 2009. In the workshop, Gonzalez summarized the social and environmental consequences of adolescent risk behaviors such as, antisocial behavior, alcohol and substance use and sexually risky behavior. She

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<sup>83</sup> Hogan et. al., "Media Education, 341.

<sup>84</sup> Ralph J. DeClemente, Gina M. Wingood, Richard Crosby, Catlainn Sionean, Brenda K. Cobb, Kathy Harrington, Susan Davies, Edward W. Hook III and, M. Kim Oh, "Parental Monitoring: Association with Adolescents' Risk Behaviors," *American Academy of Pediatrics: Pediatrics* (2001): 107; 1363, Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, accessed September 2, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.107.6.1363.

<sup>85</sup> DeClemente, et. al., 1364.

described several types of family interventions which impact the efficacy of family influence to reduce or prevent adolescent risk behaviors.

Gonzalez stated that the family is the primary socialization agent, not television, music or the media. One application from this workshop which can be applied to the premise that preaching can be used to address the negative effects of rap music on the morality of teenagers, is that pastors and youth pastors alike can reinforce the concept of church and family involvement. Gonzalez stated that, effective parenting must include a “nurturing, strength-based parenting style, which clearly and consistently defines limits for children, adolescents and teenagers.”<sup>86</sup>

In chapter two, we discussed that in Proverbs, the parents words were to be seen as valuable to life and prosperity, an aspect that Gonzalez’ work highlights. The second preaching application and point Gonzalez made related to parental monitoring and supervision of teenagers and adolescents’ help in preventing association with deviant peers, which is a primary pathway to a gradual escalation of high risk behaviors during adolescence.<sup>87</sup> As stated in chapter two, Paul admonished Timothy about guarding his life, which was in the form of a letter alerting him to the potential hazards in Ephesus. In Proverbs, parental monitoring was done in the form of wisdom teaching, which was used to deter what could become a slippery slope of risky behaviors. Gonzalez’ work further

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<sup>86</sup> Nancy A. Gonzalez, “Family Interventions to Prevent or Reduce Adolescent Risk Behavior, Social and Environmental Influences and Adolescent Risk Behavior,” presented at the Department of Psychology, Arizona State University, May 28, 2009, Science of Adolescence Workshop, Social and Environmental Influences and Adolescent Risk Behavior. The National Academies, Washington D.C. Accessed September 12, 2014.

[https://iom.nationalacademies.org/~media/Files/Activity%20Files/Children/AdolescenesWS/Workshop%202/3\\_Gonzales.pdf](https://iom.nationalacademies.org/~media/Files/Activity%20Files/Children/AdolescenesWS/Workshop%202/3_Gonzales.pdf).

<sup>87</sup> Gonzalez.

highlights the biblical truth that parent impact has similar effects across diverse cultural groups.<sup>88</sup>

Parental monitoring and mentoring can be enhanced by the Church of Jesus Christ taking a vested interest in sermons teenagers hear in order that this subgroup within the church can be reached; Preaching is one way to assist teenagers in self-policing. There are several facets to preaching that can help in the monitoring of teens. Firstly, if the sermons reflect the message that we all are sinners saved by God's grace in a style and delivery teens can understand, it will be relevant to the youth culture.<sup>89</sup> "An effective youth sermon should gently convict young people to turn from sin and trust Christ as their Savior. It should give teens hope and encouragement rather than a scolding, while convicting hearts."<sup>90</sup> Secondly, being authentic with teens and being oneself will help them receive the message because young people have a built-in imposter detector which enables them to spot a fake.<sup>91</sup> "Authenticity is the one of the most important things you can have as a speaker. It doesn't matter how polished your sermon is, if you aren't authentic they won't listen."<sup>92</sup> Sermons, which are interactive, humorous and tell stories, will enable teenagers to become involved with the sermon in order that they remember

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<sup>88</sup> Gonzalez, "Family Interventions."

<sup>89</sup> Venice Kichura, "Southern Baptist Youth Sermons," *eHow.org*, accessed October 24, 2014 [http://www.ehow.com/about\\_4679948\\_southern-baptist-youthsermons.html](http://www.ehow.com/about_4679948_southern-baptist-youthsermons.html).

<sup>90</sup> Kichura.

<sup>91</sup> Brandon Hilgemann, "7 Tips for Preaching to Teenagers," *Pastors.com*, July 2, 2013, accessed October 24, 2014, <http://www.pastors.com/7-tips-for-preaching-to-teenagers/#vanilla-comments>.

<sup>92</sup> Hilgemann.

what was preached.<sup>93</sup> This can be achieved by telling them to shout out the answer to a question or to hold a prop included in the message. Thirdly, getting to the point of the scripture and staying focused on it will eliminate anything too repetitive and keep the sermon to the point.<sup>94</sup> If kids are bored with the message they will not want to listen. The focused, Biblically based sermon will help youth ministers, seminary trained or not, maintain the exegetical integrity of preparation and not short change the teenagers.<sup>95</sup> As a way to stay exegetically authentic, youth ministers can use books which are sound in teaching and extract what the original author was saying to the original audience, in line with grammatical, literary and historical facts of passages preached. A few books that can provide this valuable information are, “A Popular Survey of The Old Testament” by Norman L. Geisler, “The I.V.P Bible Background Commentary” by Craig S. Keener or “The NIV New American Commentary” by Craig L. Blomberg.

Teenagers sensing and experiencing acceptance and accountability can also support parental monitoring in the larger church context. "Hearing sermons that deal with contexts and concerns of other members of the community will help adolescents to realize that they are part of a larger body, a realization that is key if they are to remain in the church."<sup>96</sup> Messages preached in different ways with language teenagers can understand will help them feel a part of the larger church body thus, create a sense of

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<sup>93</sup> Hilgemann.

<sup>94</sup> Hilgemann, “7 Tips for Preaching to Teenagers.”

<sup>95</sup> “How to Give a Brilliant Youth Sermon,” *Youth Ministry*, January 18, 2012, accessed October 24, 2014, <http://www.averageyouthministry.com/2012/01/18/how-to-give-a-youth-sermon.html>.

<sup>96</sup> Mike Langford, “Preaching and Adolescents: Addressing the Whole Body of Christ,” *Cymt.org.*, April 25, 2013, accessed October 24, 2014, <http://www.cymt.org/preaching-and-adolescents-addressing-the-whole-body-of-christ.html>.

belonging. The Holy Spirit is the one who enables, reaches and speaks to people in supernatural ways. In light of that fact, youth ministers should learn how to communicate the "good news of Jesus in such a way that it helps the recipients to embrace their salvation."<sup>97</sup> Diverse methods of communicating God's word will help families discuss Biblical truths when they dialogue about rap music and the positivity or negativity about songs.

It is clear that when parents monitor what kids do, whom they associate with and become proactive by educating themselves about what their adolescents engage in, it serves as deterrent from what is sexually suggested in some rap music. "Research strongly suggests that media education may result in young people becoming less vulnerable to negative aspects of media exposure."<sup>98</sup> Media education and parental monitoring are important to healthy maturation of children, adolescents and teenagers.

Given that teenagers will be watching the same videos, listening to the same rap songs and talking about similar rappers, the impact of peer relationships may reinforce sexualized behavior. Some of the risky behaviors, if families do not engage with teens, which can impact teenagers, are association with deviant peers, onset and escalation in deviant behavior, early age of substance use and disorders, elevated conflict instances in romantic relationships, poor academic performance and sexually risky behaviors.<sup>99</sup>

There are other factors which influence the efficacy of parental monitoring because they can inhibit children's safety, accelerate parentification or remove appropriate caretakers

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<sup>97</sup> Langford, "Preaching and Adolescents."

<sup>98</sup> Hogan et. al., "Media Education."

<sup>99</sup> Gonzalez, "Family Interventions."

and parents from the home. These factors include poverty, divorce, mental illness, or incarceration.<sup>100</sup> Parents are a pervasive force such that they are the protective influence in the lives of children and youth despite peer relationships.<sup>101</sup> However, when obstacles challenge parents, they can seriously be hampered from being appropriate caretakers, which can result in physical, social and/or emotional injury to children.

Also, whether the parents were married at the time of a girl's birth is an indicator of the likelihood of her being sexually active.<sup>102</sup> Other factors that influence the likelihood of teenagers having sex early are, single mothers who date often and more quickly after a divorce, transitions in family structure, single-parent households and adolescents with divorced mothers.<sup>103</sup>

The converse side to that is when parents are positive and active participants in raising their children. Many rap songs are filled with misogyny, hedonism and life without self-restraint, and for some teenagers, their parents are the only ones who influence their sexual behavior in a healthy way. Research suggests that parents can strongly influence their teens' sexual behavior. Parental involvement and guidance regarding television watching, discussion on the television programs as well as setting sexual standards by parents increases the likelihood of adolescents being abstinent.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Gonzalez, "Family Interventions."

<sup>101</sup> Gonzalez.

<sup>102</sup> "Parents' Influence on Adolescents' Sexual Behavior."

<sup>103</sup> "Parents' Influence on Adolescent's Sexual Behavior."

<sup>104</sup> "Parents' Influence on Adolescent's Sexual Behavior."

Parents heavily weigh in on the sexual behaviors of teenagers and adolescents, which the National Abstinence Education Association agrees with. The NAEA states that teenagers with a positive attitude about delaying sexual activity are more likely to practice abstinence.<sup>105</sup>

Boston University conducted a study of 11,000 students between the ages of 12-17 to determine what influenced their decisions to become sexually active.<sup>106</sup> One year later 90 percent of the students maintained the abstinence stance.<sup>107</sup> “This study proves that when teens are given skill sets needed to make the best health choice about sex, it is clear they are capable of choosing to abstain.”<sup>108</sup> The involvement of parents, two-parent families, dialogue with teens, parent knowledge of peers and teens’ whereabouts, and parent attitudes were all presented as factors in teenagers engaging in sexual activity.

Another facet to counteracting teens’ risky sexual behaviors is the involvement of fathers. In Chapter two, the father-son relationship was discussed in Proverbs, God the Heavenly Father’s relationship with Christ Jesus and finally, Paul, a father in the ministry to Timothy. These three father figures had a significant impact on their sons’ lives. It is important to note that the latest research indicates that, “fathers who are actively involved in raising their children can make a positive and lasting difference in the lives.”<sup>109</sup> To

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<sup>105</sup> “Study Show Positive Influence Delay Teen Sexual Activity,” *National Abstinence Education Association* (January 16, 2008), accessed August 27, 2014, [http://www.abstinenceassociation.org/newsroom/pr\\_011608\\_study\\_shows\\_delay.html](http://www.abstinenceassociation.org/newsroom/pr_011608_study_shows_delay.html)

<sup>106</sup> “Study Show Positive Influence Delay Teen Sexual Activity.”

<sup>107</sup> Study Show Positive Influence Delay Teen Sexual Activity.”

<sup>108</sup> Study Show Positive Influence Delay Teen Sexual Activity.”

<sup>109</sup> Wade F. Horn, David Blankenhorn, and Mitchell B. Pearlstein eds., *The Fatherhood Movement: A Call to Action* (New York: Lexington Books, October 2000), 1-2.

further highlight the point of the impact fathers have over and above negative rap music is that, “involved fathers bring positive benefits to their children that no other person is as likely to bring.”<sup>110</sup> The connection between fathers and child outcomes is monumental including achievement in academics, psychological well-being, cognitive ability and how children behave socially despite environmental influences.<sup>111</sup> The two-parent family impact on children is greatly seen in that, fathers impact their children through the quality of relationship they have with the mothers of their children.<sup>112</sup> Children benefit from having healthy role models from both sexes, which promotes healthy gender identity as each respective parent socializes differently.<sup>113</sup> Other positive points of a father’s impact on his children are learning important life skills, a sense of physical and emotional security, increasing chances of academic success, lowering suicide, juvenile delinquency and early sexual activity.<sup>114</sup> Additionally, “a number of studies suggest that fathers who are involved in nurturing and who are playful with their infants have children with higher IQs, as well as better linguistic and cognitive capacities.”<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Jeffery Rosenberg and Bradford W. Wilcox, “The Importance of Fathers in The Healthy Development of Children,” *U.S. Children’s Bureau Office on Child Abuse and Neglect* (2006), accessed August 27, 2014, <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/fatherhood/chaptertwo.cfm.html>.

<sup>111</sup> Rosenberg and Wilcox.

<sup>112</sup> Rosenberg and Wilcox.

<sup>113</sup> Stephen D. Green, Ph. D, “20 Reasons Why Your Child Needs You to be an Active Father,” *Family and Consumer Sciences* (October 2000), Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service, <http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/parenting/fathering/20-reasons-why-your-child-needs-you-to-be-an-active-father/>.

<sup>114</sup> Green.

<sup>115</sup> Rosenberg and Wilcox.

Despite the positive information about the role and impact of a father, there are still the undermining messages that Satan sends through rap music in which can undermine a positive fatherly role to those who are spiritually unaware. Some stereotypes show that many men who are “low income urban fathers as disengaged and uninvolved with their children.”<sup>116</sup> There are some factors such as unemployment, poor relationships and communication with the mothers that can push men away from their families. There is much research showing the potential negative impact of children without a fatherly presence.<sup>117</sup> Conversely, children with an active father in their lives do better as a whole as opposed to not having him be active.

For children who have an active father, there are multiple benefits but for those who do not, there is the surrogate role model, which helps fill in gaps where a father would be active. “One of the most important advantages an at-risk-youth can have is a connection to a positive adult role model.”<sup>118</sup> There are teenagers who are not in a traditional two-parent family and there are adults who are looking to share positive examples for young people who need them. It is important to note that on the subject of mentoring as a means of addressing the negative effects of rap music on the morals of teenagers, that non-parent mentors, teachers, clergy, and civic leaders are highly instrumental in helping teenagers become self confident and take on challenges.<sup>119</sup> “A

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<sup>116</sup> Rosenberg and Wilcox, “The Importance of Fathers.”

<sup>117</sup> Green, “20 Reasons Why Your Child Needs You.”

<sup>118</sup> Gina Barton, “Positive Role Models are Key to Kids’ Success,” *Journal Sentinel* (November 9, 2009), accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.jsonline.com/news/milwaukee/69487877.html>.

<sup>119</sup> Marilyn Price-Mitchel, Ph.D., “The Moment of Youth, helping teens believe in themselves,” *Psychology Today* (January 29, 2013), accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-moment-youth/201301/mentoring-youth-matters.html>.

five year study sponsored by Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada found that children with mentors were more confident and had few behavioral problems.”<sup>120</sup> Generally speaking, the young people were more confident and less anxious regarding pressure from peers as a result of a positive role model.<sup>121</sup> To further highlight the point, a study conducted by the University of Georgia of African American youth, indicated that mentors are extremely important in that, despite discrimination, family problems, and abuse they were less likely to break the law or to abuse substances if they had a positive mentoring relationship with an adult.<sup>122</sup> Forty young people were interviewed as to what qualities the person who influenced their lives had, which were, being supportive, an active listener, set high goals, authentic in their interest in the youth, perspective lending and unimposing of their own beliefs.<sup>123</sup>

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has briefly summarized the history of rap music and the impact of various artists on its evolution. It has examined how different facets of the music developed including, how the language changed to predominantly gangsta’ rap as a result of commercial pressure. Subsequently, we noted its transformation from an urban, African-American genre into mainstream music that has become a worldwide phenomenon impacting all aspects of society. Next, it examined the increase of sexual

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<sup>120</sup>Price-Mitchel, “The Moment of Youth.”

<sup>121</sup> Price-Mitchel.

<sup>122</sup> Price-Mitchel.

<sup>123</sup> Price-Mitchel.

content in rap music over time, as well as, the influence of rap music videos on the sexual choices of teens. We also showed how repetitive listening to certain kinds of music influences the brain which in turn influences the sexual behaviors of teenagers and adolescents. Additionally, we discussed the powerful influence of parents, mentors and peer groups in the lives of teens as a deterrent to immoral actions. Finally, we stressed that the preaching of God's Word must be geared to specific audiences like teens, to create a sense of belonging. It was also impressed that by maintaining the integrity of the Biblical text through the use of preaching books, under the enablement of the Holy Spirit, the needs of teenagers and youths in our society can be addressed.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **SYLLABUS: LEARN TO DISCERN WORKSHOPS**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF WORKSHOP:**

This workshop aims to help ministers who are called to youth ministry but may not presently have the finances for seminary education, acquire rudimentary exegetical skills. There are many youth ministers who serve in churches and/or come from families where finances are limited, thus preventing them from attending theological school and learning vital exegetical skills. The workshop serves to expose these leaders to the terms and methods of examining scripture so as to further spur them on to deeper theological study and help sharpen their preaching skills. Also, it would be a resource and encouragement for those who are praying for a way to grow in knowledge of the scriptures.

Furthermore, the workshop will equip youth ministers with important information about the negative effects of explicit rap music on teens and provide them with tools to address the moral dilemmas teens are experiencing in this hip-hop culture. The goal is to spearhead discussions between the church, parents and teenagers regarding moral pitfalls, from a biblical worldview, with the hopes of addressing the negative effects of rap music on the morals of teenagers. More importantly, it is the aim of this workshop to help prepare God's people for service in His Kingdom so that they are strengthened in unity, faith, knowledge of Christ, maturity and grow to a fuller measure in Christ Ephesians 4:11-12. Key resources will be provided during the workshop highlighting the relevance of the Bible in making moral choices.

## **2. GOALS OF THE WORKSHOP:**

The first goal of the workshop is to equip youth ministers with the rudimentary techniques of preaching expository sermons. The second goal is to encourage teens to be committed to living for God and to be willing to address their issues through the church. Third, parents and teenagers must be willing to analyze unedited rap lyrics and talk with each other about how negative rap songs can influence teenagers' moral choices. Participant will be asked to be honest and open to working with their respective church's youth ministry to address the moral crisis negative rap music has caused in society.

## **3. OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSHOP:**

The schedule of the workshop is as follows: Friday evening session for youth ministers will take place for three hours (6:00-9:00 p.m.) This will be followed by two subsequent sessions on Saturday for both parents and teenagers. The Saturday morning parent session will last for (75) seventy-five minutes (9:00 to 10:15 a.m.) and the teenagers' session will last for (90) ninety minutes (10:30-12:00).

The Friday workshop will expose youth ministers to the necessity of expository preaching in youth ministry, as well as, personal holiness requirements and biblical resources. The parent workshop will consist of listening to an uncensored rap video along with a questionnaire and culminate with a discussion about how this type of music affects their teenagers and tips on how to help teens work through moral issues. The third session will consist of teenagers listening to a scripture reading and hearing how a young Christian (Timothy) in the first century had to deal with moral traps. Next, they will watch an uncensored rap video and complete a questionnaire. The workshop will

culminate with a discussion of their observations about the video and biblical instruction about how to overcome moral challenges.

#### **4. PREPARATION FOR THE WORKSHOP:**

Participants will be asked to pray that the Holy Spirit gives them an open mind. The youth ministers will be given a list of resources and asked to bring their own Bibles. The parents and teenagers will be given paper to take notes, pencils and questionnaire forms.

#### **A. TEACHING OUTLINE FOR EACH SESSION**

##### **Session 1: Youth Ministers – The Context of Expository Preaching**

**(Friday, 6:00-9:00 p.m.)**

Friday (6:00 -7:50 p.m.)

**Preliminary Goal – participants will know the instructor, each other's names and the syllabus.**

*Preliminary Objective 1* – By the end of the first hour, the instructor will introduce himself to the class and give a brief overview of his experience in youth ministry, preaching and seminary.

*Preliminary Objective 2* – By the end of the first hour, participants will introduce themselves to each other and give a brief summary of their youth ministry background and state the main reason they are attending the workshop.

*Preliminary Objective 3* – By the end of the first hour, participants will fill out contact sheets to be utilized for communication regarding ministry events, prayer and support amongst each other.

*Preliminary Objective 4* – By the end of the first hour, participants will be given be an overview of the workshop via Power point.

**Goal #1- Students will understand the “human sin condition” means and its impact on man’s relationship with God.**

*Objective 1* - Students will understand the “human sin condition” means and its impact on man’s relationship with God.

*Objective 2* - Students will understand God’s responses to the human sin condition.

*Objective 3* - Students will understand the meaning of God’s “reconditioning.”

**Goal #2 – Student will understand the process of preparation for the Preacher / Youth Minister.**

*Objective 1* - Students will examine their motivation for Youth Ministry.

*Objective 2* - Students will understand the process of preparation for preaching.

*Objective 3* - Students will understand the process of self- application before preaching a sermon.

*Objective 4* - Students will conduct a self-inventory of their Christian lifestyle.

Friday (8:00– 9:00 p.m.)

**Goal #3 – The Case for Expository Preaching in Youth Ministry**

*Objective 1* - Students will understand the term expository preaching by being provided with two definitions from the book Biblical Preaching (Second Edition) by Haddon W. Robinson.

*Objective 2* - Students will understand the factors of expository preaching in youth ministry.

*Objective 3* - Students will understand how to apply the historical context of the scripture to a contemporary youth culture.

*Objective 4* - Students will be provided with a list of exegetical resources that can be used in sermon preparation.

**Session 2 :Parents & Teens - Learn to Discern Workshops**

**(Saturday, 9 a.m. – 12:00 noon)**

Saturday, 9:30 -10:15 a.m. (Parent Workshop)

**Goal #4 – To provide parents with media education and practical tools to assist them in combating the negative effects of rap music on their teenagers’ lives.**

*Objective 1*- Facilitator will provided handouts and view Power-point on “The Influence of Rap Music on Teenagers.”

*Objective 2* - Parents will examine lyrics from a popular rap song with explicit lyrics and understand the impact of content on teenagers’ actions/attitudes.

*Objective 3* - Parents will understand that their involvement with their teenagers is vitally important in helping teens make wise decisions.

*Objective 4* - Parents will understand why Youth Pastors and Youth Ministry involvement is vital to teens.

Saturday, 10:30-12:00 (Teen Workshop)

**Goal #5 – To help teenagers learn to discern the immoral messages being proliferated in popular rap music and gain a Biblical perspective for their perspective for their moral decisions.**

*Objective 1* - Youth Minister will explain the purpose of the workshop and provide agenda to participants.

*Objective 2* - Youth Minister will read 2 Timothy 2:22-26 as a biblical context for the workshop.

*Objective 3* - Teens will view a rap music Video of a popular explicit rap song and complete a questionnaire regarding its content.

*Objective 4* - Youth Minister and Teens will engage in a discussion about the impact of rap music in their lives and how they can combat the influence of the hip-hop culture.

### **B. Expanded Teaching Outline for Each Session**

#### **Session 1: Youth Ministers- The Context of Expository Preaching**

**Friday, 6:00 –9:00 p.m.**

**Wordy Wise quote:** Joseph Stowell states:

“Preachers and sermons can be funny, entertaining, enthralling, intriguing, intellectually stimulating, controversial, full of impressive theological and doctrinal footpaths, and authoritative.

But if ultimately the outcome does not result in a changed life because of an encounter with the truth, then it has not been what God intended preaching to be.”<sup>124</sup>

### **PRELIMINARY GOAL**

- A. The instructor will introduce himself and give a brief overview of his background.
- B. The students will introduce themselves and fill out contact sheets.
- C. The instructor will provide a brief overview of the workshop.

**Goal #1: Students will understand what the term human “sin condition” means and its impact on man’s relationship with God.**

The goals for this hour:

- Students will understand what the term “sin condition” means and the impact sin has on man’s relationship with God (Genesis 3:7-24).
- Students will understand the term “reconditioning” and its application.
- Students will understand God’s response to the human sin condition.

**Objective #1: Students will understand the human “sin condition” and its impact on man’s relationship with God.**

The teacher will provide the following examples of the human sin condition:

- a. Through disobedience in the garden, sin and death entered the world (Gen. 2:16-17).

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<sup>124</sup> Keith Wilhite and Scott Gibson, *The Big idea of Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 125.

- b. Humankind continuously fails to meet God's holy standards (Rom. 3:23).
- c. Sexual depravity was one result of sin's effect on humankind (Rom. 1:24).
- d. A sinful nature cannot produce anything other than sinful acts (Gal. 5:19-21).
- e. Man's prideful attempts to exalt self and to attain success without God (Genesis 11:1-6).
- f. The perpetual stigma within human beings is called the "depravity factor". This factor is identified as the Fallen Condition Focus (FCF), which is, "the mutual human condition that contemporary believers share with those to or for whom the text was written that requires the grace of the passage."<sup>125</sup> "The text's contents are God's response to an aspect of our fallenness."<sup>126</sup> (Gen. 3:15)

**Objective# 2: Students will understand God's responses to the human sin condition**

- a. The students will understand that God's response to sin is Jesus Christ through reading John 3:16-17.
- b. The students will reflect after the scripture is read and discuss God having a plan for everyone as it pertains to Jeremiah. 29:11.
- c. The students will read 2 Peter 3:9 and the instructor will prompt students to say aloud in unison, "God does not want anyone to suffer eternal punishment".
- d. The students will read Romans 10:14-15 as an example of how God uses preachers.
- e. The teacher will read God's charge to the preacher found in 2 Tim. 4:2-5.

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<sup>125</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 42.

<sup>126</sup> Bryan Chapell, 42.

- f. The students will read from an excerpt in *Preaching That Changes Lives* by Thomas Nelson, the following quote:

“how the ancient application addresses and remedies the universal problem of human sin will quickly uncover the most obvious and urgent aspects of the passage to be applied in any age?”<sup>127</sup>

***Main Idea: the Bible is relevant even to contemporary youth culture.***

- g. The students will understand some ways the human “sin condition” has impacted people throughout history and God’s response to sin.
- h. . The students will further understand the curse in Genesis 3 by examining Brian Chapell’s parallel called the *depravity factor*.

**Objective # 3: Students will understand the meaning of God’s reconditioning.**

- a. The students will discuss why youth ministers should always preach redemptively, despite the many lies perpetuated in the media.
- b. The students will examine what Haddon Robinson says about the reconditioning of the human condition by God as the “*God Factor* or the vision of God... God is always there. Look for Him. At different times he is the creator, a good Father, the Redeemer, a rejected Lover, a Husband, a King, a Savior, a Warrior, a Judge, a Reaper, a vineyard Keeper, a banquet Host, a Fire, a Hen protecting her chicks, and so on.”<sup>128</sup>
- c. Students will read John 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 3:9 in order to understand God’s plan of salvation for people, His sanctifying work and patience with mankind.

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<sup>127</sup> Michael Faberez, *Preaching That Changes Lives* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 470.

<sup>128</sup> Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 94.

**Goal #2 – Students will understand the process of preparation for the Preacher  
/Youth Minister.**

The goals for this hour:

- Students will examine their motivation for Youth Ministry.
- Students will understand the preparation process of the preacher.
- Students will understand that they must first apply the scripture to themselves before preaching to others.
- Students will evaluate their own Christian lifestyle and motives for ministry.

**Objective #1: Students will examine their motivation for Youth Ministry**

- a. Students will read Rom. 1:8-15 and understand how the ultimate motivation of their preaching should be for the church's mutual encouragement stemming from hearing the preached word.
- b. Students will know the benefit of hearing the preached word of God is for corporate and individual instruction and imparts direction for teenagers.
- c. Students will understand that a spiritual one hundred-eighty degree about face took place for the Thessalonian believers who, after hearing the preached Word, turned from worshipping idols to God (1 Thess. 1:9-10; 2:13) because they accepted it as the very words of God.
- d. Students will know that preaching with passion is a directive by reading 2 Tim. 4:2. Haddon Robinson states that Paul was ordering Timothy "to cry out, herald, or exhort. Preachers should pour out the message with passion and fervor in order

to stir souls.”<sup>129</sup> Haddon Robinson says, “Preaching in Paul’s mind did not consist of someone discussing religion. Instead, God spoke through the personality and message of a preacher to confront men and women and bring them to himself.”<sup>130</sup>

**Main Idea:** Be yourself, not anyone else and trust that the Holy Spirit will speak through your own experiences and personality.

**Objective #2: Students will understand the process of preparation for preaching**

- a. Students will read 2 Timothy 2:20-21 in order to gain a context for being usable by God. The preacher must start off his preparation for preaching by being on his knees to connect with and confess to God.
- b. Students will examine the following questions posed by Frank Pollard in the Handbook of Contemporary Preaching.

**Question# 1: “Have you bought what you’re selling?”**

**Teaching Idea:** “How sad is the idea of churches empty of people. A thousand times more tragic is the thought of a pulpit filled with a Christ-less preacher.”<sup>131</sup> Stay close to Christ in your relationship with him by making sure Christ is your Lord and Savior. You can’t live a life that you are not a part of. Are you fresh and clean? Have you put into practice 1 John 1:9 so you can be forgiven of sin, known and unknown. You must also

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<sup>129</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 20.

<sup>130</sup> Robinson, 19.

<sup>131</sup> Frank Pollard, *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 136.

ask the Holy Spirit to uncover your motives so that you preach to relay God's truth and not how great you preach. After people tell you how great you preach, they will need Spirit filled truth to make sense out of the lies Satan tells them not anything motivated by your flesh. Also, remember to walk the talk. Live out those things you preach and not just give lip service to the people.

***Question #2: "Can you do without it?"***

**Teaching Idea:** Students' will be asked to examine their own passion to preach via several questions. Do you feel compelled to preach the Gospel? Does the call on your life to preach drive you to do the best you can each time you preach as a dying man to dying people? Do you feel as though you were born to preach and do you have a passion in you that consumes your thoughts, desires and will? Do you have an insatiable desire to preach? Is the thought of preaching like fire in your bones?

***Question #3: "Is the main thing the main thing?"***

**Teaching Idea:** Students will be encouraged to disallow any interference with personal devotion time and sermon prep time (Acts 6:2-4). This provided the Apostles time to pray and minister the Word, which resulted in growth in the church (Acts 6:7).

***Question # 4: "Are you Real"?***

**Teaching Idea:** Students will be encouraged to practice what they preach (Matt. 23:2-3) from a pure heart with the goal of pleasing God, not people (1 Thess. 2:3-12) and living worthy of the calling of God.

***Question #5: “Who is in charge of your career?”***

**Teaching Idea:** Students will know that as a Christian their lives are now lived by faith in Christ who died for them (Gal. 2:20). Your ambitions, hopes, dreams and goals are all to be laid at the feet of Christ. A popular idiom is that “man proposes but God disposes.”

**Self inventory questions for reflection:**

- Is the music you listen to by secular or Christian artists?
- What kinds of programming do you watch on television?
- What conversations do you engage in?
- What jokes do you make and / or laugh at?
- Are you dating a non-Christian?
- Are you accountable to any older and more mature Christian of the same gender?

**Objective #3: Students will understand the process of self-application before preaching a sermon**

- 1) Students will see themselves as God’s tool (2 Tim. 2:20-22) and understand the following concepts they must keep in mind when preparing a message:
  - a. Before you preach to others know that God will reprove you.
  - b. You cannot preach to others on a subject you haven’t asked God to deal with you on.
  - c. Your audience needs real life illustrations in order to connect with your message.
  - d. Submit to the Holy Spirit confronting you in areas the text addresses.

**\* 10-Minute Break**

**Friday, 8:00 – 9:00 pm**

**Goal #3: The Case for Expository Preaching in Youth Ministry**

The goals for this section:

- Students will understand the term expository preaching by being provided with two definitions from the book Biblical Preaching (Second Edition) by Haddon W. Robinson.
- Students will understand the process of expositing a biblical concept.
- Students will understand how to apply the historical context of the scripture to a contemporary youth culture.
- Students will be provided with a list of exegetical resources which can be used in sermon preparation.
- Students will be provided with a sample sermon outline to aid in sermon preparation.

**Objective #1 – Students will understand the term expository preaching**

- a. Students will briefly discuss what they think expository preaching is and the similarities and differences to other types of sermons.
- b. The participants will be given two definitions of expository preaching from the book Biblical Preaching (Second Edition) by Haddon W. Robinson which states, “the communication of a biblical concept, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical and literary study of a passage in its context, which the

Holy Spirit first applies to the personality and experience of the preacher, then through the preacher, applies to the hearers.”<sup>132</sup> “Expository preaching task is to communicate what God committed to Scripture in order to give God’s people his truth for their time.”<sup>133</sup>

**Objective #2: Students will understand the factors of expository preaching in youth ministry**

**1. The sermon is limited to the passage:**

Students will identify the thought flow of the original author. “First, above all, the thought of the biblical writer determines the substance of an expository sermon.”<sup>134</sup> If the thoughts are identified, then the expositor can connect the dots and effectively explain to the contemporary hearers what is going on in a given passage.

**2. Communicate the author’s idea:**

Students will be informed that they should examine words, phrases and sentences so that it becomes apparent what the original writer is saying and also, the entire passage should be read in its entirety so that ministers can learn what the original author is communicating.

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<sup>132</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 21.

<sup>133</sup> Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 31.

<sup>134</sup> Robinson, *Biblical Preaching* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 21.

### **3. The author's ideas are found in the text:**

Students will gain an understanding of the original author's ideas by conducting a historical, grammatical and literary examination of the text in context. "Ultimately the authority behind expository preaching resides not in the preacher but in the biblical text. For that reason, expositors deal largely with an explanation of Scripture, so that they focus the listener's attention on the Bible."<sup>135</sup> Biblical authors' ideas express a variety of circumstances compiled over 1500 years in languages of ancient cultures.<sup>136</sup>

- **Historical** study of the text includes examining individuals, geopolitical events, topographical features that are mentioned in the text. What historical writers of the Biblical Era said about a person, subject or animals of those times to give the historical context and insight as to what was going on around the original writer.
- **Grammatical** study of the text takes a closer look at classes of words, their relation to each other, arrangement in sentences and syntactical rules of language. This includes examining the actual words on the page, how often a particular word or phrase is mentioned and how wordplay factors into this part of exegesis.
- **Literary** study of the text deals with the type of genre in which the writer is speaking to his original audience. Biblical genres include but are not limited to: narrative, historical, contracts, speeches, prayers, parables, proverb, riddle, letter,

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<sup>135</sup> Robinson, 24.

<sup>136</sup> Gordon D. Fee & Douglass Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for all its worth* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 18.

prophetic oracle, apocalyptic, sermon, political communications, poetry, history, various laws and biographical sketches. Understanding which kind the contemporary preacher is studying will assist them in understanding the motives of the original author.

#### **4. Apply the text to the audience**

Students will discuss ways to bridge the gap from the Bible times to contemporary society, especially with teenagers.

- Effective use of application so that teenagers can have practical use of what you preach in their lives.
- Use of applications, which the particular audience (Haitian, Jamaican etc.) can understand and draw direct parallels to what you are conveying.
- Explanation of how contemporary society is similar and dissimilar to the world of the Bible.
- Explain the cultural, historical and theological contexts, which bare on the text being preached.
- Exercises to learn information about the contemporary culture:
  1. Read hip-hop magazine targeted toward teenagers such as Vibe Magazine. 2) Watch television and movies teenagers would. 3) Take note of the name brand clothes teenagers wear. 4) Ask teenagers what the meaning of certain slang terms they use. 5) Inquire as to who the most famous or best rapper is and ask why.

**Teaching Idea:** Encourage students to discuss ways to bridge the gap from Bible times to contemporary society so that it applies to teens.

**Objective #3: Students will understand how to apply the historical context of the scripture to a contemporary youth culture.**

- a. The students will read Acts 17:16-34 in order to see how the Apostle Paul observed the idols in the city of Athens.
- b. The students will identify at least three idols in the hip-hop culture.
- c. The students will give examples of how church youths are influenced by rappers by identifying any behaviors, language or clothing they observed teens displaying.
- d. The facilitator will read the following quotes to highlight several main ideas about connecting with youths.

**Quote #1:** John R. W. Stott states:

“Biblical and theological studies do not by themselves make for good preaching. They are indispensable. But unless they are supplemented by contemporary studies, they can keep us disastrously isolated on one side of the cultural chasm.”<sup>137</sup>

**Teaching Idea:** Learn about the cultures and subcultures in which teenagers live in.

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<sup>137</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 190.

**Quote #2:** William W. Klein states:

“faithful application of the Bible to new contexts requires that we become as earnest in our study of the contemporary world as we must learn not only to exegete the Scriptures but also to exegete cultures.”<sup>138</sup>

**Teaching Idea:** Be a student of what is happening in the world you are preaching in.

**Quote #3:** Dean Borgman states:

“to be heard, the Word must come into the world of the young people. Presence precedes preaching, and listening precedes speaking.”<sup>139</sup>

- a. Each student will identify 1-2 causes teenagers do not feel that youth pastors understand their issues.

**Teaching Idea:** Using Illustrations teenagers can relate to will help them understand what you are preaching about.

**Quote #4:** Dan Webster states:

“How do we know what is relevant to students? What’s relevant is what’s important to them. How can we know what’s important to them? Talk to them, read what they read, listen to their music, see the movies they attend, and watch the TV programs they enjoy. Be Friends with them. I guarantee that your best communication will come out of the

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<sup>138</sup> William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: W. Publishing Group, 1993), 425.

<sup>139</sup> Dean Borgman, *When Kumbaya is Not Enough* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 19.

relationships you have with the students. Knowing kids and what they think about is the place to start.<sup>140</sup>

**Teaching Idea:** When you are perceived as an ally, teenagers will share their concerns and issues with you.

**Quote #5:** Dean Borgman states:

“it is never enough to study young people; we must live among them and feel the pulse of their lives, the beat of their hearts.”<sup>141</sup>

- a. The students will generate reasons teenagers may apply what a youth pastor says to them about youth subculture.
- b. One student will read Heb. 4:14-16 aloud and the class will give reasons why it is important to know God through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- c. The students will list the difference between knowing surface information about teenager versus having a close personal relationship with them.

**Teaching Idea:** Hang out with your teenagers so you can understand what they experience first hand.

**Objective #4: Students will be provided with a list of exegetical resources to help them ascertain intent of the original author’s ideas include:**

1. Bible dictionary / encyclopedia to look at articles including background of Bible books and biographies of characters (Holman).

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<sup>140</sup> Richard R. Dunn and Mark H. Senter III, gen. eds., *How Do You Communicate to Groups of Youth?* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1997), 422.

<sup>141</sup> Borgman, *When Kumbaya is Not Enough*, 30.

2. Concordance to determine the meaning of words through usage (Strong's exhaustive).
3. A good translation for example: New American Standard Version (NASV).
4. Lexicon to give root meanings, grammatical forms, definitions and a list of passages in which a word occurs and classifications of the use of a word in its contexts (Hebrew / Greek).
5. Word-study books to give insight into words used throughout the Old and New Testaments.
6. Old and New Testament Bible Background Commentary (IVP).

**Teaching Idea #1:** A good interpretation of a text requires good tools in order to find out the original intent of the biblical text, so that the contemporary preacher can speak to a modern audience in terms they can understand and apply to their lives.

**Teaching Idea #2:** “a text cannot mean what it never meant. Or to put that in a positive way, the true meaning of the biblical text for us is what God originally intended it to mean when it was first spoken.”<sup>142</sup>

**Teaching Idea #3:** Use more than one version of the bible during your study because by using only one version the preacher is limited and “thereby committed to the exegetical choices of the translation as the Word of God.”<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Fee & Stuart, *How to Read the Bible*, 26.

<sup>143</sup> Fee & Stuart, 28.

**Teaching Idea #4:** No interpretation, tools or desire are a substitute for prayer and asking guidance from the Holy Spirit throughout the exegetical process or preaching of a sermon.

**Objective #6: Students will understand how to formulate an outline for sermon preparation and delivery.**

### **Sample Sermon Outline**

**Introduction:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Historical Context:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustration:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transitional statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustration:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transitional statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustration:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Point:** \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Subpoint:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Illustration:** \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Transitional statement** \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Conclusion: (summarize all points):** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Session 2: Teens & Parents - Learn to Discern Workshops**

**Saturday: 9 am – 12 noon**

### **Overview**

This workshop consists of two sessions with separate groups for parents and teenagers. Parents will view information compiled from academic articles on the negative effects of explicit rap music on youth behavior. They will then have a discussion on their role in their teenagers' lives and the role of the youth ministry in combating the effect of negative rap music. During the teenagers session, teens will read 2 Tim. 2:22-26, hear about the challenges Timothy faced and the advice Paul gave to him. In this passage, the Apostle Paul, Timothy's father in the ministry, admonished his son to use the Word of God to teach, rebuke, correct and train.<sup>144</sup> Next, they will watch an uncensored rap music video and have a discussion on the effect listening to this type of music have on their

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<sup>144</sup> 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

morals. The focus groups will take place at different times so that neither group is influenced by the other.

#### **B. PARENT SESSION 9:00 – 10:15 a.m.**

**Goal - To provide parents with media education and practical tools to assist them in combating the negative effects of rap music on their teenagers' lives**

*Objective 1-* The parents will read statistical information regarding the influence of negative rap music on teenager

*Objective 2-* The parents will read the lyrics and watch a rap video of an explicit rap song in order to know what their teens may be listening to.

*Objective 3-* The parents will know that their involvement with their teenager is vitally important in helping teens make wise moral decisions.

*Objective 4-* The parents will know why Youth pastors and Youth Ministry involvement is vital in their teen's lives.

**Objective #1: Facilitator will give parents handouts and view Power-Point entitled: "Things Parents should think about: The Influence of Rap Music on Teenagers" with the following information:**

- a. One study indicated that adolescents between the ages of 12-17, who watched TV. with more sexual content were more likely than those who did not, to engage in sexual intercourse.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Jane D. Brown, Kelly Ladin L'Engle, Carol J. Pardun, Guang Guo, Kristin Kenney and Christine Jackson, "Sexy Media Matter: Exposure to Sexual Content in Music, Movies, Television, and Magazines Predicts Black and White Adolescents' Sexual Behavior," *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* vol. 117 (2006): 1018-1027, accessed September 12, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.2005-1406, 1019.

- b. Early sexual activity may be caused by a multiplicity of factors but media is viewed as playing a major role influencing the sexual attitudes and behaviors of young people.<sup>146</sup>
- c. Adolescents who listen to music containing sexually objectifying lyrics influence them to progress more quickly in their sexual behavior, regardless of race or gender.<sup>147</sup>
- d. In 2000, the Video Music Awards featured songs amplifying rape and murder with explicit lyrics and corresponding sound effects.<sup>148</sup>
- e. "Sexually degrading lyrics promote acceptance of women as sexual objects and men as pursuers of sexual conquest."<sup>149</sup>
- f. Media education has the potential to reduce the harmful effects of media on teenagers by helping parents understand and support this educational tool.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Miriam E. Bar-on MD, Daniel D. Broughton MD, Susan Buttross MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, Alberto Gedissman MD, M. Rosario Gonzalez de Rivas MD, Michael Rich MD, and Donald L. Shifrin MD, "Sexuality, Contraception and, The Media," *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* vol 107, no.1 (January 1, 2001): 191-194, accessed September 12, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.107.1.191.

<sup>147</sup> Steven C. Martino, Rebecca L. Collins, Marc N. Elliott, Amy Stachman, David E. Kanouse, and Sandra H. Berry "Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music Lyrics and Sexual Behavior Among Youth," *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatrics* vol. 118 (2006): e430-e441, accessed September 12, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.2006-0131, 1019.

<sup>148</sup> Miriam Bar-on MD, Daniel D. Broughton MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, Alberto Gedissman MD, M. Rosario Gonzalez de Rivas MD, Michael O. Rich MD, and Donald L. Shifrin MD, "Media Violence," *Pediatrics: American Academy of Pediatric* vol. 108, no. 5 (November 1, 2001):1222-1226, accessed September 2, 2014, doi:10.1542/peds.108. 5.1222.

<sup>149</sup> Martino, et al., Exposure to Degrading Versus Non-degrading Music Lyrics, 437.

<sup>150</sup> Marjorie Hogan MD, Miriam Bar-On MD, Lillian Beard MD, Suzanne Corrigan MD, Alberto Geissman MD, Francis Palumbo MD, Michael Rich MD, and Donald L. Shifrin MD, "Media Education," *American Academy of Pediatrics: Pediatrics* (1999): 341, accessed September 2, 2014, <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/104/2/341.full.html>.

- g. Media education is the study and analysis of mass media. A media literate parent is able to decipher the messages in the various media such as rap music rather than ignoring it.<sup>151</sup>
- h. A media educated parent understands all messages sent out through the various forms of media and have the ability to shape viewpoints about the way people view the world.<sup>152</sup>

**Objective #2: Parents will examine lyrics from a popular rap song with explicit lyrics and understand the impact of content on teenagers' actions / attitudes.**

**“Feds Watching”**

**2 CHAINZ (feat Pharrell)**

[Intro: Pharrell & 2 Chainz]

Tomorrow, tomorrow

Tomorrow, tomorrow

Ain't no such thing as tomorrow

The way we living today.

[Verse 1: 2 Chainz]

Dreads hang on designer everything

Mr. Comme des Garcons, Mr. Alexander Wang

Mr. Chain, pinky ring, flow insane, ho insane

Man, these shoes I got on, these the hardest I've done seen

It look clean when you pour it; I remix it make it dirty

If she got good head and text me I text back and tell her “hurry”

This that category 5 when I walk up in the strip club

Throw it high, make you and George Washington head butt

OG's never fed us, now young niggas fed up

Ballin' so hard I deserve a and one

Baking soda marketing, I'm getting it ain't I? Obviously.

You a bitch, you a ho, that's just my philosophy

And I'm known to kick it like the captain of a soccer team

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<sup>151</sup> Hogan et. al.

<sup>152</sup> Hogan et. al.

Billie Jean red leather same color Red Lobster  
And she brain wash ya—head doctor  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching

[Hook x2: 2 Chainz & Pharrell]  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
Drop top, head bopping

[Verse2: 2 Chainz]  
Grams to Grammys, two guns Yosemite  
Niggas put their Glock on you're a#@, f\$#@ that Heather B  
Pumping that amphetamine, all this D I'm peddling  
I be somewhere settling, somewhere that you have never been  
To the top you never been, you might need a respirator  
Money on the rise like I'm counting on a elevator  
You gon' need a detonator swimming with them barrcudas  
Close the docket on that \$\$\$@!\* prosecutor  
This Armani, this Givenchy, I parachute you  
I'm so fly I jumped out the air wearing Gucci (Tell 'em!)  
I'm raw, talking California Rolls  
Smoking California weed with California hoes (Truu!)  
Sending flicks to my partners in the state pen  
I just got some pants made out of snake skin  
See them shades you got on called Ray-Bans  
And the shades I got on cost eight bands (damn)  
[Hook]<sup>153</sup>

### **Reflections of chapter 3**

- Rap is the music of the streets with various forms some very uplifting and positive but some very satanic. Even artist like Dizzy Gillispie and Charlie Parker were deemed negative in their day.<sup>154</sup> Despite the artists or themes of the songs, if constantly listened will influence their thinking and eventual behavior.

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<sup>153</sup> 2 Chainz, "Feds Watching" Lyrics, [www.songlyrics.com](http://www.songlyrics.com), accessed February 3, 2015, <http://www.songlyrics.com/2-chainz/feds-watching-single-lyrics>.

- In 1981, MTV went from 27 million to 52 million viewers in the 1990s and all kinds of rap videos were broadcast, whether positive or negative which speaks to the momentum the media gave rap music.<sup>155</sup>
- There was a study of 522 black girls studied which unveiled those who watched gangster rap 14 hours per week were more likely to practice behaviors observed in the videos.<sup>156</sup>
- In the “brain on music” it was stated that music has the ability to affect our feelings.  
The more you listen to a certain type of music, the more likely you will want to hear it.<sup>157</sup>
- Teenagers listening to rap with immoral lyrics were likely to practice what the lyrics said if the lyrics were judged as not being negative.<sup>158</sup>
- Parents play a major role in how teens view sex, peers and behaviors if the parents are intentional about discussions on those topics and if the teens perceive that the parents monitor them.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> Kenneth Powell, “Hip-Hop is The Most Important Youth Culture on The Planet,” *Time.com*, September 22, 2000, accessed September 25, 2014, <http://content.time.com/time/arts/article/0,859>.

<sup>155</sup> Sarah Ashby MD and Michael L. Rich, “Video Killed the Radio Star: The Effects of Music Videos on Adolescent Health,” *Adolescent Medicine Clinics* (2005): 371, accessed September 12, 2014, <http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/content/124/5/1488>.

<sup>156</sup> Sid Kirchheimer, “Does Rap Put Teens at Risk?” *WebMD*, March 3, 2003, accessed May 9, 2008 <http://www.webmd.com/baby/news/20030303>.

<sup>157</sup> Elizabeth Landau, “This is Your Brain on Music,” *CNN Health*, April 15, 2013, accessed August 12, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/04/15/health/brain-music-research/index.html>.

<sup>158</sup> Elizabeth Landau, “How Your Brain Makes Moral Judgments,” *CNN Health*, March 27, 2014, accessed August 12, 2014, <http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/26/health/brain-moral-judgments/index.html>.

<sup>159</sup> Kjersten Olinney and Linda Klepacki, “Teen Sexual Behavior Quick Facts.” *Focus on Social Issues, Abstinence Policy Quick Facts*, March 2005, accessed September 12, 2014,

- Parents work schedule, their availability to the teens and monitoring of teens, influence teen decisions to engage in morally risky behaviors. Factors that influence the relationship are meaningful time spent with teens, if the parents know the friends of their teens and quality of relationship.<sup>160</sup>

**Objective 3: The parents will understand that their involvement with their teenager is vitally important in helping teens make wise decisions.**

- a. Parents will share and discuss their responses to the questionnaire and discuss how viewing this type of video and/or listening to these type of music may influence their teenagers' moral choices.
- b. Parents and facilitator will discuss strategies for becoming more actively engaged in their teen's lives.

**Objective 4: The parents will understand why Youth pastors and Youth Ministry involvement is vital to their teen's lives.**

- a. Parent and facilitator will share and discuss how parents and the church can work together to help their teens create a Biblical worldview for making moral choices.
- b. Closing and prayer for the teenagers by name.

**TEENAGERS SESSION: 10:30 am -12:00**

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[http://research.easybib.com/research/index/search?ft=contributor\\_full&search=+++%22Linda+Klepacki%22medium=&page=2](http://research.easybib.com/research/index/search?ft=contributor_full&search=+++%22Linda+Klepacki%22medium=&page=2).

<sup>160</sup> Wen-Jui Han, Daniel P. Miller, and Jane Waldfogel, "Parental Work Schedules and Adolescent Risky Behaviors," *Developmental Psychology*, vol. 46 no. 5 (September 2010):1245-1267, accessed September 3, 2014 doi:10.1037/a0020178.

**Goal: To help teenagers learn to discern the immoral message being proliferated in popular rap music and gain a biblical perspective for their moral decisions.**

*Objective 1-* Teens will utilize the bible as the spiritual guide for remaining Godly in an immoral culture.

*Objective 2 -*Teens will listen to a rap song and view video in order to analyze the lyrical content and message.

*Objective 3-* Teen will discuss impact of negative rap music on their moral choices and discuss role of the church in strengthening their Christian faith.

**Objective #1: Teens will utilize the bible as the spiritual guide for remaining Godly in an immoral culture.**

- a. Facilitator will read aloud 2 Timothy 2:22-26. “ Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on God with a pure heart. Don’t have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses.”

**Objective #2: Teens will listen to rap music in order to analyze the lyrical content and message**

## 2 CHAINZ (feat Pharrell)

### “Feds Watching”

[Intro: Pharrell & 2 Chainz]

Tomorrow, tomorrow  
Tomorrow, tomorrow  
Ain't no such thing as tomorrow  
The way we living today.

[Verse 1: 2 Chainz]

Dreads hang on designer everything  
Mr. Comme des Garçons, Mr. Alexander Wang  
Mr. Chain, pinky ring, flow insane, ho insane  
Man, these shoes I got on, these the hardest I've done seen  
It look clean when you pour it; I remix it make it dirty  
If she got good head and text me I text back and tell her “hurry”  
This that category 5 when I walk up in the strip club  
Throw it high, make you and George Washington head butt  
OG's never fed us, now young niggas fed up  
Ballin' so hard I deserve a and one  
Baking soda marketing, I'm getting it ain't I? Obviously.  
You a bitch, you a ho, that's just my philosophy  
And I'm known to kick it like the captain of a soccer team  
Billie Jean red leather same color Red Lobster  
And she brain wash ya—head doctor  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching

[Hook x2: 2 Chainz & Pharrell]

I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
I'mma be fresh as hell if the Feds watching  
Drop top, head bopping

[Verse2: 2 Chainz]

Grams to Grammys, two guns Yosemite  
Niggas put their Glock on you're a#@, f\$#@ that Heather B  
Pumping that amphetamine, all this D I'm peddling  
I be somewhere settling, somewhere that you have never been  
To the top you never been, you might need a respirator  
Money on the rise like I'm counting on a elevator

You gon' need a detonator swimming with them barrcudas  
 Close the docket on that \$\$\$@!\* prosecutor  
 This Armani, this Givenchy, I parachute you  
 I'm so fly I jumped out the air wearing Gucci (Tell 'em!)  
 I'm raw, talking California Rolls  
 Smoking California weed with California hoes (Truu!)  
 Sending flicks to my partners in the state pen  
 I just got some pants made out of snake skin  
 See them shades you got on called Ray-Bans  
 And the shades I got on cost eight bands (damn)  
 [Hook]<sup>161</sup>

### Reflections of Chapter 2

- Wisdom literature like Psalms and Proverbs provides Christians with a Godly perspective for living.<sup>162</sup>
- The advice of parents is given from God to help apply moral skillfulness and mental discernment in a world of competing and ungodly ideals in society Prov. 4:20-25.
- Teenagers have the ability to access God's power in order to help them resist temptation. God always provides spiritual strength to escape temptation 1 Cor. 10:13.
- Our Heavenly Father is available to teens, as he was to Christ<sup>163</sup> so that they live holy lives.

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<sup>161</sup> 2 Chainz, "Feds Watching."

<sup>162</sup> Prov. 1:2-7.

<sup>163</sup> Matt. 4:10, 2 Tim. 2:7.

- 2 Tim 2:22-26 teaches them to flee youthful lusts by avoiding situations and people who pull them away from God and engage in friends and activities that will help them mature in Christ.
- Engaging immoral songs, environments and relationships have a way of turning a Christian away from God, as it did with Solomon 1 Kings 11:1-13.

**Objective 3: Teen will discuss impact of negative rap music on their moral choices and discuss role of the church in strengthening their Christian faith.**

- a. Facilitator will encourage teens to be open and honest in discussing their moral challenges.
- b. Group will discuss ways churches and family can provide support to teenagers.
- c. Closing Prayer for teenagers.

## CHAPTER 5

### OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

#### SUMMARY AND EVALUATION

I conducted my workshop at my home church in Dorchester, Massachusetts, which has approximately 60 members. The “Learn to Discern” workshop took place on a Friday evening for parents and the following Saturday morning for teens. There were a total of six teenagers (three male / three female) and four parents. After several months of being inactive, the youth ministry was restarted in December of 2014, and I was able to utilize these teens and their parents as my focus group. The four parents included one woman and three men (including one married couple) with a racial ethnic makeup of Afro-Caribbean and Latino backgrounds. The participants all live within walking distance of the church and were all extremely interested in participating in the workshop.

The teen session began with a reading and discussion on 2 Timothy 2:22-26, in order to give a biblical context for the teens to understand that Christian youths throughout history have had to deal with cultural pressures which are usually anti-God and immoral. Next, there was a video presentation that portrayed some of the sexual images young Timothy most likely faced in his culture. It was interesting to note that, as the teenagers realized that Timothy also had to deal with an immoral culture in the ancient City of Ephesus, they recognized that they too ought to live as Christ-like as possible. The teenagers stated that they have friends whom they have to avoid in order to escape evil enticements<sup>164</sup> because they recognize that bad influences would be hard to

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<sup>164</sup> 2 Tim. 2:22.

resist if they associate with those individuals. When they were asked about how they interacted with friends who aren't saved, they stated that they will usually argue with them about refraining from behaviors which are ungodly, such as, cursing, premarital sex and cheating on exams. However, they realized that if they become more Christ-like, they will not need to argue with other teens who are determined to live in immoral ways

Additionally, there was a discussion on the major influence rap music has had on the lives of people in the urban setting and particularly, the power of the media to influence teenagers' actions. This also included information on the research of the effects of negative rap music on teenagers' actions and the impact it has in influencing their daily lives such as clothing choices and even You-tube discussions on who is the best rapper. There were visible displays of agreement such as head nodding, smiles, laughs and even a few comments such as "help us God." The teenagers did not make many remarks but they shook their heads in disbelief and said "wow" as the information unfolded. However, one teenage boy stated that several rap songs include the sounds of gun-shots which was confirmed by another teen. The teenagers agreed that many of the messages in rap music are traps of the devil <sup>165</sup> and have even observed that some of their peers who are enamored with these type of rap songs are also those who have dropped out of school, joined gangs, become teen parents or have contracted sexually transmitted infections. The teens however stated that, despite listening to rap music with sexually explicit lyrics, they do not feel compelled to become sexually active.

The teenagers also revealed that they all listen to rap music regularly. All but one teenager indicated that they listened to rap music daily and three of the teens stated that they will continue to listen to negative rap songs, despite the sexually explicit and/or

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<sup>165</sup> 2 Tim. 2:26.

crime referenced lyrics, because the beats are “fun.” However, the three others indicated that they will turn off those types of songs because they make “no sense” and they didn’t want to be thinking about the things being promoted in the raps. All the teen participants stated that the song had too many elements of crime by highlighting drugs, killing and shooting, and some were even able to recite the lyrics about a District Attorney being shot.

Next, responses to the questions on the questionnaire were discussed. Four teenagers indicated that they shared problems with peers while one stated that they shared problems with their parents and the other, their sibling. As the teen discussed their responses, their answers indicated that they shared their problems with people whom they felt won’t judge them and whom they could trust. All the teenagers stated that they are interested in hearing sermons tailored to the youth and they would like to hear more youth oriented messages. They also indicated that they would attend youth group regularly if it had discussion topics that dealt with issues teenagers are facing. The teenagers all stated that their church could help them mature spiritually by having more activities like this workshop and by teaching them about the Bible. When asked to comment on 2 Timothy 2:22-26, the teenagers stated that they couldn’t allow music or other things to control how they think and that youth oriented sermons would help them learn about society and how to live as young Christians.

During the parent session, the parents watched the 2 Chainz video and immediately wanted to discuss its content. They indicated that there was too much sexually related lyrics and images in the video and agreed that the portrayal of women was done in a clearly misogynistic manner. They were very concerned that this video

and others like it, permeates youth culture and are being used as a tool for Satan to destroy the lives of young people. The sentiment expressed by the parents was that any teenager listening to this genre of music regularly, would be influenced over time and that murder, drug dealing, sex and a Godless lifestyle could be the cumulative effect of this type of video.

The parents unanimously agreed that this genre of music is the cause for more prayer at home and dinner table discussions about who, as well as what, their teenagers are listening to. The parents affirmed that they will talk to their teenagers about the influence of this kind of rap music and as an aside comment, one parent mentioned the names of two of their teens' favorite rappers - Drake and Nicki Manaj. However, none of the parents knew exactly how much time the teens listened to rap.

One father shared that he had fallen into many of the traps that rap music promoted and about the pitfalls he had found himself in and vowed to talk with his son more about making choices based on God's Word. Another father stated that he and his wife had given their daughter a cell-phone but were allowed to check it at any time for her web-site usage and other information they deem concerning, as a condition for her to have it. The group also concurred that fighting with their teens and totally banning rap music was not wise but they should instead use the strategic approach of talking about the music. The parents also realized that talking to their teens about rap music content could provide an opportunity to talk about other topics and be used as potential moments to strengthen their relationships with their teen.

Both the parent and teen groups were congruent in their views regarding the 2 Chainz video by agreeing that it was demeaning to the women who were scantily clad

while dancing seductively to the music. There were also many explicit remarks about criminal activity, violence and rebelliousness to authority and even though the groups met separately, they had the same opinions about the lyrics, which they felt were extremely violent, especially when the rapper made hand gestures to indicate cocking a shotgun. The groups found that there were overtly sexual lyrics highlighted in the video and when one of the teenagers did not understand what 2 Chainz meant when using an unfamiliar slang term for oral sex, the other teens were able to clarify it for her.

There was also a discussion on prayer and it was interesting to notice that both teens and parents agreed that prayer is something they appreciated. All but one of the teenagers pray with their parents and/or caregivers and indicated that it helps them while one teen stated that they only “think about” praying with parents. All the parents stated that they prayed with their teenagers, however, they expressed the need and desire to pray with them more frequently. All the parents reported that the workshop helped them gain insight into what teenagers are faced with and the need to talk more with the youth.

One critical observation made was that parents are very concerned about what their teenagers are listening to and want the church to have more events such as this workshop, as well as, youth group discussions to help the teenagers really open their hearts to God. It was duly noted that teens and parents are asking for more engagement from the church to meet the needs of the family.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) The parents and teenagers create and sign a covenant including input of the youth-minister, whereas, the parents and teenagers agree to eat dinner, read a scripture passage, pray and discuss it at least one times per week on specific days. The hope is that parents and teenagers will grow in their discussion about the Word of God and interact around it.
- 2) The youth ministry will have an annual parent-teen check-in covenant service and a dinner to follow in order share about how things are going in the home and discuss how the covenant is helping relationships in the home in order to provide support for each other.
- 3) The youth minister will have a quarterly meeting with parents in order to discuss ways in which the ministry and parents can collaborate around focusing their attention and youth activities to address difficulties the teenagers are experiencing.
- 4) Once per year, the youth ministry should have a candid discussion on God's plan for sex, as well as, gender roles with both teens and parents in the room.

## **APPENDIX A.**

### **FOCUS GROUP AGENDA FOR TEENAGERS**

(10:30 a.m.-12:00 noon)

- Prayer / Pizza and soda
- Explanation of focus group
- 2 Timothy 2:22-26 (discussion)
- 2 Chainz video
- Questionnaire
- Discussion
- Prayer and Closing

## **APPENDIX B.**

### **TEEN QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 1) Was sex a part of the video? Not at all / somewhat / a lot / too much
- 2) Was the portrayal of women positive or negative? Pos. / Neg.
- 3) Do sexually explicit rap songs cause you to think about having sex? Yes / No
- 4) How often do you listen to rap music? daily / 2-3 xs per week / 4-5 xs per week
- 5) When you think a rap song is negative do you keep listening to it?  
Yes / No / why / why not
- 6) Any criminal mentioned or observed? If so, what was it?
- 7) Who would you share your problems with? Sibling / minister / peer / parent? Why?
- 8) Do the sermons you listen to address youth issues? Yes / no
- 9) Would you want to hear more sermons about youth related issues? Yes / no  
you
- 10) If youth issues were discussed at youth fellowship, how often would you attend?

Once / Twice / Three / Four times per caregivers? Do you think it helps you with your problems? Yes / No / how?

11) Do pray with your parents /

12) How can your church help you grow spiritually?

13) What did you learn from this exercise?

## **APPENDIX C.**

### **FOCUS GROUP AGENDA FOR PARENTS**

(9:00 – 10:15 a.m.)

- Prayer / light refreshments
- Explanation of focus group
- Research information about the effects of negative rap and media education.
- 2 Chainz video
- Parent questionnaire
- Group discussion
- Prayer and Closing

## **APPENDIX D.**

### **PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

(Circle and/or write the answers)

- 1) In your opinion, how much of the video and lyrics had to do with sex? A little / some / a lot / too much
- 2) How were women portrayed in the video? Positive or Negative.
- 3) Was there any criminal activity portrayed or mentioned in the video? Yes or No, What was it?
- 4) Do you think these images influence your teenager's behavior/ thinking? Yes or No, If so in what ways?
- 5) Do you and your teenager discuss rap music they listen to? Yes / No
- 6) Do you know the name of your teenager's favorite rapper? Yes / No if so, who is it?
- 7) Do you pray with your teenagers? If so, how often?
- 8) How can your church's youth ministry address the negative influence of rap music on your teenager's morality?
- 9) Do you know how often your teenager listens to rap music? If so, how often?
- 10) How has this exercise helped you?

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## VITA

Rev. Maurice S. Greaves grew up in the Mattapan section of Boston. He is the only son of Jim and Beryl Greaves and is the brother of Renee, Nicole and Danielle. He is married to Karen Greaves and is the father of two wonderful daughters, Angelica and Gabriella.

As an infant, he was dedicated at Twelfth Baptist Church by Rev. Dr. Michael E. Haynes. He was very active in church youth activities such as tutoring, Boy Scouts, Children's Choir under Mrs. Clara Jenkins, TBC Gents' Basketball Team which was coached by Deacon Ronald Whitehead and practiced the art of Okinawan GoJu Ru Karate taught by Sensei Richard Scott. He also led or was involved in other ministries such as Christian Education, Youth Ministry and Missions. He was actively involved in both the Junior and Senior High Fellowships under Rev. Bruce H. Wall. Maurice accepted Christ and was baptized at the age of thirteen and it was at this time that his faith was challenged and cultivated.

Maurice is a graduate of Salem State College, MA, where he obtained a BS Degree in Criminal Justice in 1997. In 2005, he obtained a Master of Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (CUME). On September 14, 2003, Maurice was licensed to preach at Twelfth Baptist Church and in July 2010, he was ordained at the Massachusetts Avenue Baptist Church through the American Baptist Church Denomination where he served as pastor for a brief period.

Vocationally, Maurice is a licensed social worker (L.S.W) and was employed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) from 2000 - 2015. During his employment at DCF, he served as an investigator, assessment worker and in the short-term stabilization unit. During his time at DCF, he mentored numerous new male social workers and was extremely involved in the Nurturing Fathers and Families Groups. Maurice is presently a probation officer at the Suffolk Superior Court in Boston.

Maurice currently serves on the ministerial staff at the Global Ministries Christian Church in Boston, MA and is the coordinator/teacher of the Bible Institute and Missions Ministry Chairperson. His life verse is Galatians 2:20.